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Cross
1
Sumiko Amakawa

Cross

Volume 1

created by
Sumiko Amakawa

TOKYOPOP

HAMBURG // LONDON // LOS ANGELES // TOKYO

Cross Vol. 1
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Chapter 1
And the Word was with God
In the beginning was the Word
...And the Word was God.
The Bible The Gospel According to John Chapter 1 Section 1

Cross

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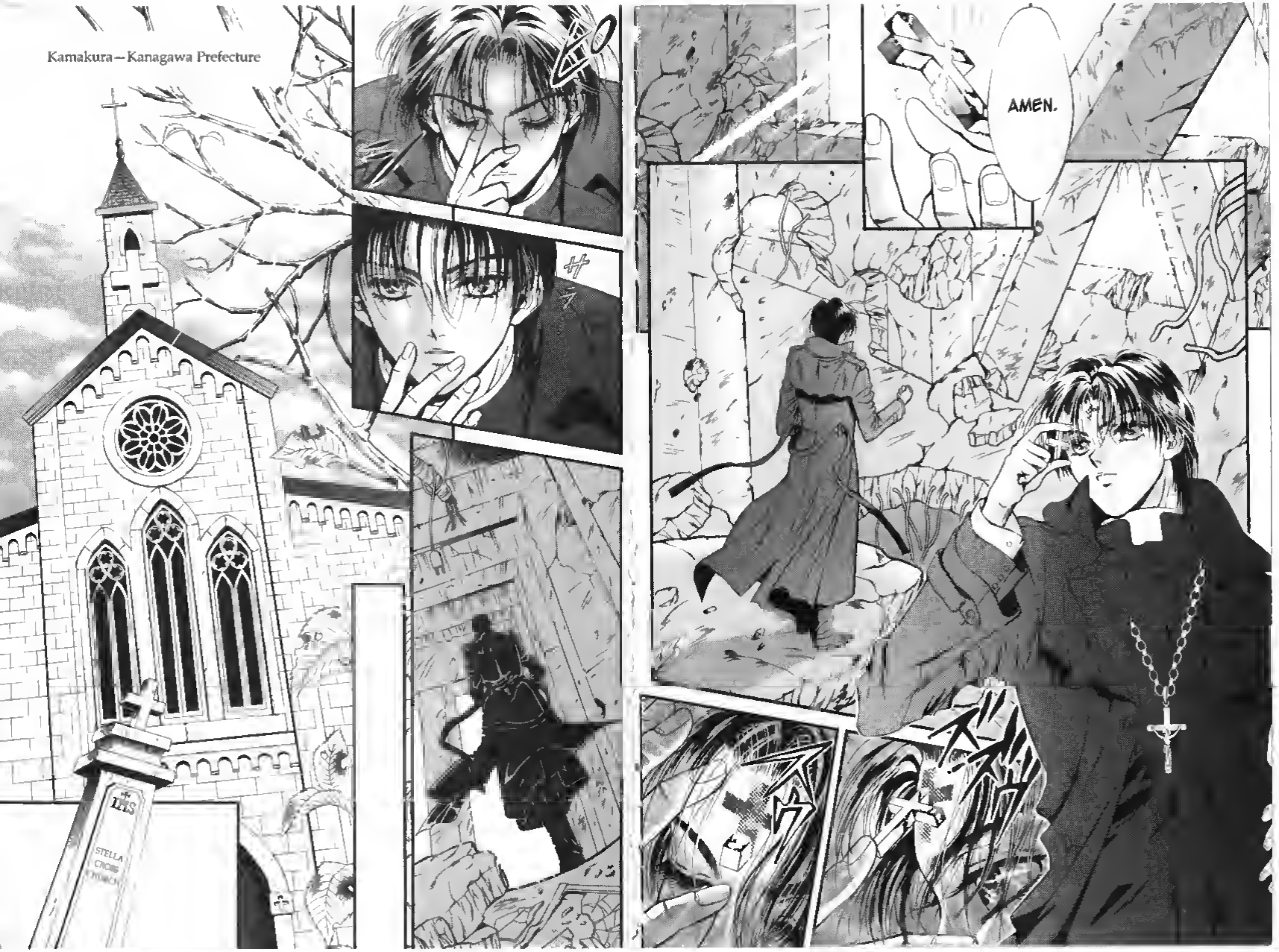
Chapter 1
Code Name: "Cross"


Kamakura—Kanagawa Prefecture
AMEN.
IHS
STELLA
CRUCIS

NOW THAT'S ODD... THE DOOR WON'T OPEN.
BUT THIS DOOR IS NEVER LOCKED...
EH?
MY LORD!!!
WHAT IS IT...
... YOU ARE GUARDING?

MY NAME IS...
...SHIZUHA MATSURI.
IS THIS A ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH?
YES. IT IS.
THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG...
THIS IS THE MAGIC CIRCLE OF KABBALAH!!
BUT...BUT HOW...?
I THINK YOU NEED TO HAVE A LOOK AT THIS.
...powerful symbol used in the practice of the Kabbalah.
HELLO. I AM A PRIEST OF THIS CHURCH.
MY NAME IS TAKARA AMAKUSA. AND YOU WOULD BE...?

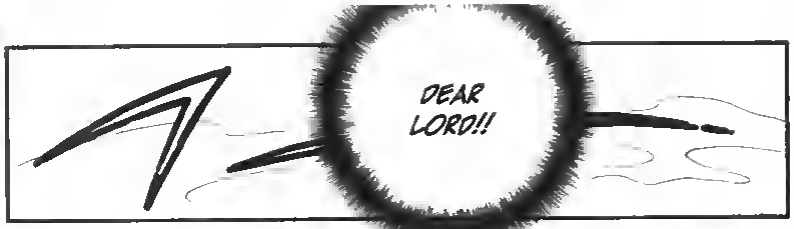
I'M SORRY. DID I ACCIDENTALLY WALK IN ON SOME SORT OF LOVE SCENE?!
GRIP
LORD...
NOT FUNNY, DAD
NOW, PLEASE-- GET THE BATH READY.
ALL RIGHT. I'M SORRY. I'LL HURRY.

KABBALAH?
YES. IT COMES FROM ANCIENT JEWISH MYSTICISM, A DOCTRINE OF MYSTERIES.
HISTORICALLY, IT CAN BE USED TO CREATE CHARMS TO WARD OFF EVIL--
--BUT IT CAN ALSO BE USED BY HERETICS AND OTHERS TO CREATE A CURSE OR TO SUMMON THE DEVIL.
TAKARA?
THE BELL OF THE ANGELUS* HAS RUNG. YOU SHOULD BE AT PRAYER.
I WILL, FATHER --
--BUT COULD YOU PLEASE GET A BATH READY FOR THIS YOUNG LADY?

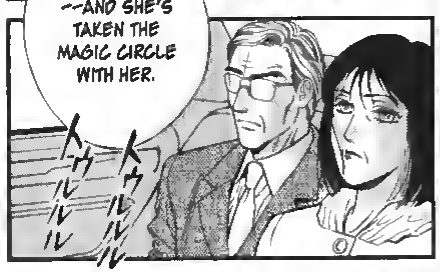
*The Angelus A Roman Catholic Devotion, traditionally recited three times a day to the sound of the bell

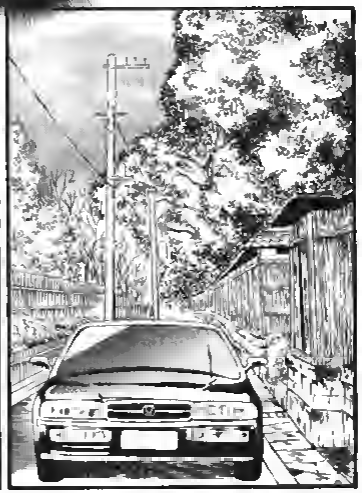
AMAKUSA

AFTER ALL--
--THESE PEOPLE ARE NOT TO BE UNDER-ESTIMATED.


DEAR LORD!!

SHE'S RUN INTO A REAL MESS OF A PLACE, THAT DAUGHTER OF YOURS--
STELLA CROSS CHURCH, EH?


--AND SHE'S TAKEN THE MAGIC CIRCLE WITH HER.
トゥルルルル
トゥルルルル



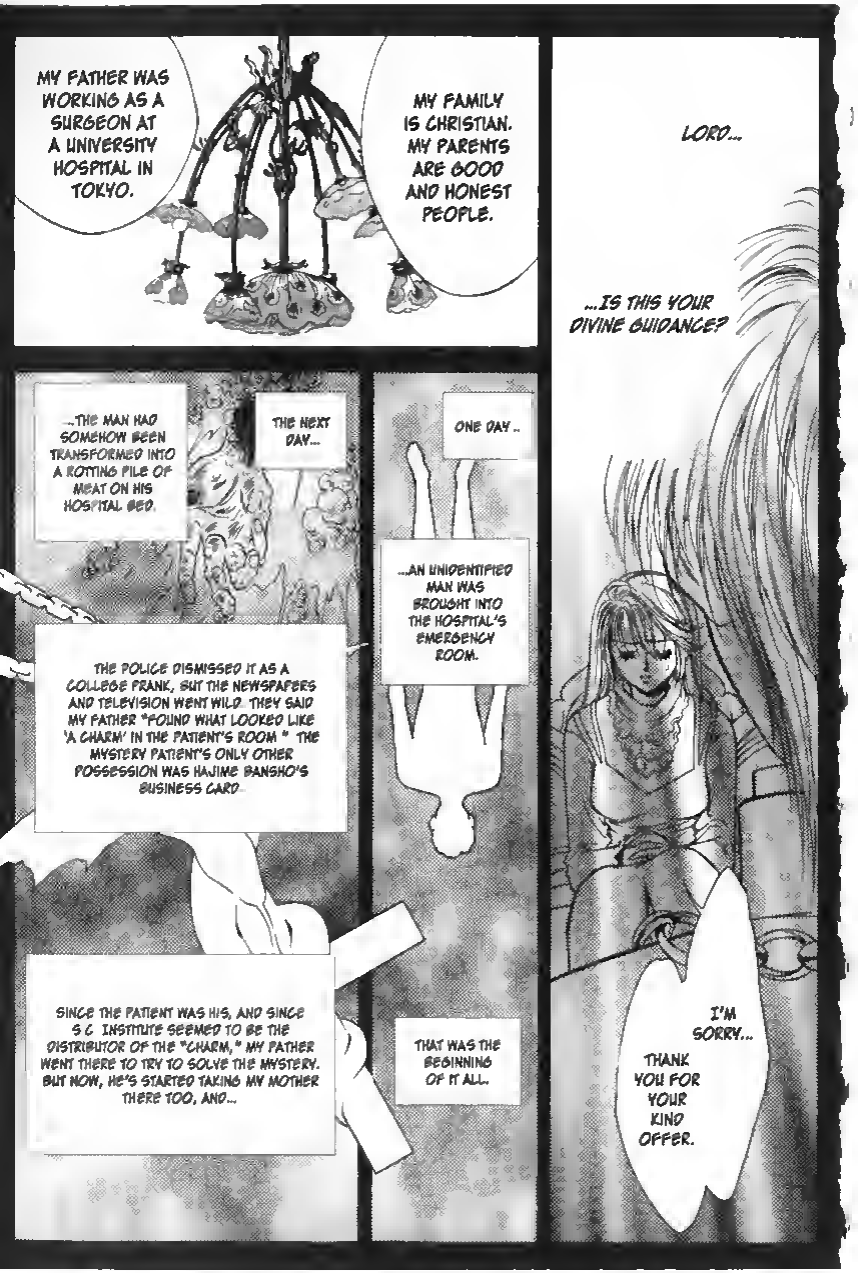
YES, I WANT YOU TO GATHER AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE...
...AND AS MANY WEAPONS AS YOU CAN, AS WELL.
NO, NOT YET.
FIRST WE'D BETTER GO INSIDE AND SEE WHAT'S WHAT.

BEEP
YES, THIS IS BANSHO SPEAKING.
OH...
...IT'S YOU.

NO...
SERIOUSLY, FATHER...
...I'M SO SORRY THAT OUR DAUGHTER HAS BOTHERED YOU.
I'M AFRAID HER EXAMS HAVE PUT HER UNDER A TREMENDOUS STRAIN, AND SHE'S RUN AWAY AGAIN.
BUT SINCE WE KNOW THAT SHE'S HERE, WE'D APPRECIATE YOU LETTING US SEE HER.
IF...IF THEY FIND ME HERE...
THIS PLACE IS MY LAST HOPE.
...BUT THE POLICE WOULDN'T EVEN LISTEN TO ME.
I'M SO AFRAID...
I RAN LIKE A MADWOMAN TO GET AWAY FROM THEM...
...I DON'T KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME!
THEN I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY QUICKLY... BEFORE I GET THESE KIND PEOPLE INVOLVED..
MUMBLE MUMBLE
IT'S DISAPPEARED...

SO, IS IT TRUE THAT YOU WERE RUNNING AWAY FROM YOUR EXAMS?
I SEE.
THE CLOTHES WERE MY MOTHER'S.
THIS ROOM WAS MY MOTHER'S, TOO, ACTUALLY.
WHAT?
I'M SORRY TO BE SO MUCH TROUBLE.
OH. AND THANK YOU FOR THE CLOTHES... FOR EVERYTHING.
AS SOON AS THEY'RE GONE, I'LL LEAVE.
IT'S A PRIVATE SCHOOL. HOLY CROSS ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL.
HMM
WHICH SCHOOL?
NOT AT ALL! I MEAN. IT'S TRUE THAT I'M TAKING EXAMS. BUT...
...WHICH MEANS SHE'LL BE A JUNIOR NEXT YEAR, AND THE SAME AGE AS ME...
...OR A SENIOR, WHICH MEANS SHE'LL BE OLDER THAN I AM.
I MEAN, SHE LOOKS TO BE AROUND 20 OR SO...
IS SHE TALKING ABOUT A "TRANSFER TEST?"

HERE. YOU CAN USE THIS ROOM.
K-
KLICK


MY FATHER WAS WORKING AS A SURGEON AT A UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL IN TOKYO.
MY FAMILY IS CHRISTIAN. MY PARENTS ARE GOOD AND HONEST PEOPLE.
LORD...
...IS THIS YOUR DIVINE GUIDANCE?
...THE MAN HAD SOMEHOW BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A ROTTING PILE OF MEAT ON HIS HOSPITAL BED.
THE NEXT DAY...
ONE DAY..
...AN UNIDENTIFIED MAN WAS BROUGHT INTO THE HOSPITAL'S EMERGENCY ROOM.
THE POLICE DISMISSED IT AS A COLLEGE PRANK, BUT THE NEWSPAPERS AND TELEVISION WENT WILD. THEY SAID MY FATHER "FOUND WHAT LOOKED LIKE 'A CHARM' IN THE PATIENT'S ROOM." THE MYSTERY PATIENT'S ONLY OTHER POSSESSION WAS HAJIME BANSHO'S BUSINESS CARD.
SINCE THE PATIENT WAS HIS, AND SINCE S.C. INSTITUTE SEEMED TO BE THE DISTRIBUTOR OF THE "CHARM," MY FATHER WENT THERE TO TRY TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY. BUT NOW, HE'S STARTED TAKING MY MOTHER THERE TOO, AND...
THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF IT ALL..
I'M SORRY...
THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND OFFER.

TALK ABOUT HAVING A POKER FACE!!
IN ANY EVENT...
...HE DIDN'T EVEN RAISE AN EYEBROW...
...EVEN THOUGH IT WAS AN EMERGENCY...
I MEAN... THERE I WAS...HALF NAKED, AND...
...SO FRANTIC...
I WAS SO AFRAID...
CARD SAYS HIS NAME IS HAJIME BANSHO, HEAD OF S.C. INSTITUTE, TOKYO BRANCH.
...THAT MAN WHO CAME WITH YOUR PARENTS...
UHMM...
LOOK, I HOPE YOU'RE NOT THINKING THAT YOU DON'T WANT US INVOLVED.
IF YOU NEED HELP, YOU SHOULD SAY SO.
I SERIOUSLY DOUBT SHE WAS RUNNING AWAY FROM HER TESTS. THEN WHY...?

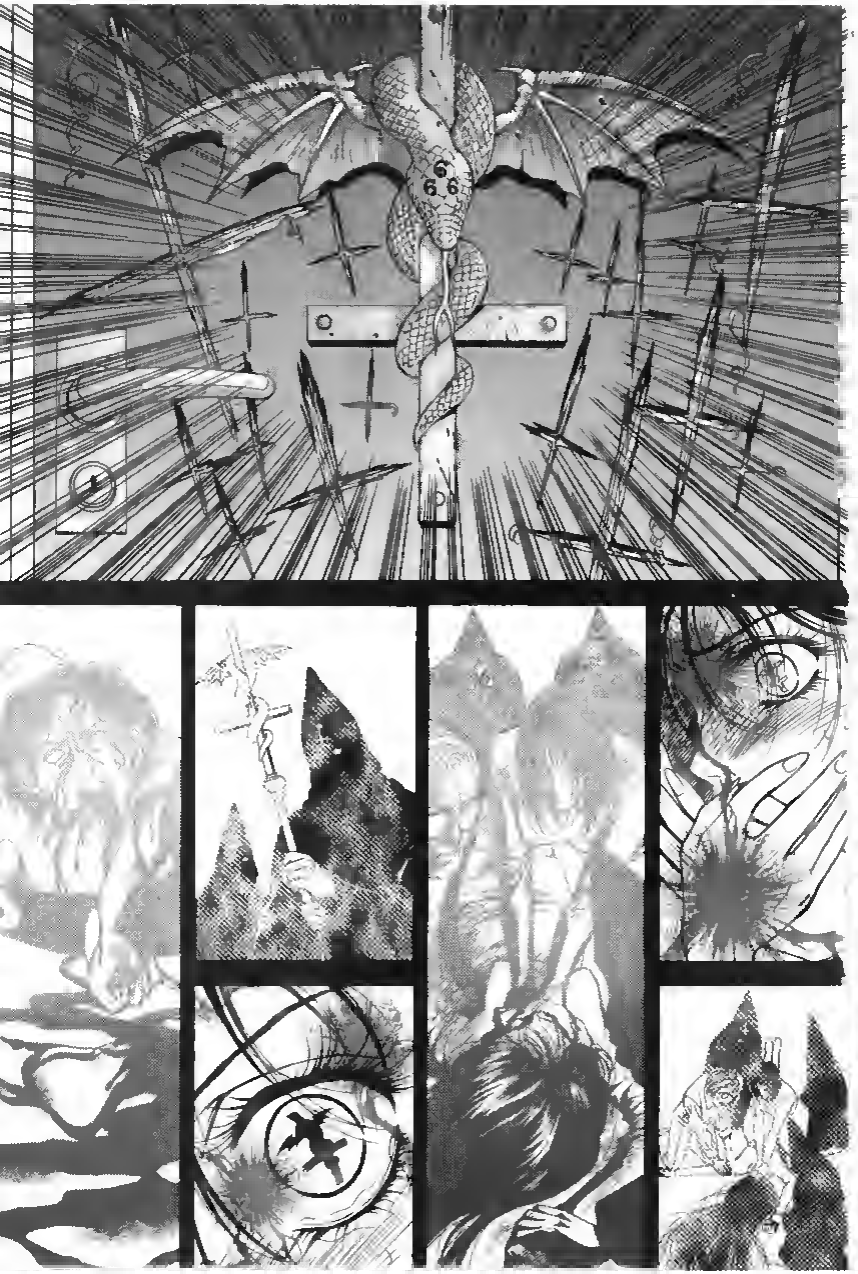
IT'S AN IMP THAT ISN'T EVEN BRIGHT ENOUGH TO SPEAK. ALL IT TAKES TO KILL IT OFF IS HOLY WATER.
WHAT...?!?
THE PATIENT WHO DIED SO MYSTERIOUSLY WAS PROBABLY "POSSESSED" OR "DEMONIAC." HE DIED BECAUSE HE WAS AT THE END OF HIS AFFLICTION.
WHAT IS THAT THING?!
LORD, SOMEONE WHO TRANSFERS THIS MUCH MALIGNANCY TO HIS SIMPLEST POSSESSIONS...
THIS HAJIME BANSHO IS A DANGEROUS MAN.
WHO...?
WHAT ARE YOU...?
NO WONDER YOU RAN AWAY FROM IT ALL.
AND I'LL BET THAT YOUR FATHER'S MYSTERY PATIENT LOOKED LIKE THIS WHEN HE DIED.
WATCH.
...HIS PERSONALITY HAS CHANGED.
SHHHH!
WHA...
SHK
Hajime Bansho
Hajime Bansho

FOR THE TIME BEING, MY FATHER HAS TAKEN CARE OF YOUR PARENTS. THEY'RE GONE.
THERE'S A REASON FOR THIS MARRIAGE--- BUT WE CAN TALK ABOUT IT LATER.

I AM AN EXORCIST.
MY CODE NAME IS...
..."CROSS."
*Christian name = Baptismal name
HEY, WAIT A MINUTE!
I'M ALSO CATHOLIC.
AND ANY CHILD KNOWS A CATHOLIC PRIEST CANNOT MARRY!
MY CHRISTIAN NAME* IS ANGELA.
THEY ARE MY FATHER AND MOTHER.
...MARRIED THE ONLY DAUGHTER OF THE AMAKUSA FAMILY.
THE EXPERT EXORCIST, FATHER GERAROO BERBAROO SERLIO, WHO IS HALF ITALIAN AND HALF JAPANESE...
FOR GENERATIONS, RESPONSIBILITY FOR STELLA CROSS CHURCH HAS FALLEN TO THE AMAKUSA FAMILY...AS WELL AS THE TERRIBLE JOB THAT COMES WITH IT.

DIABOROS EST DEUS INVERSUS.
(THE DEVIL IS GOD'S IMAGE REVERSED IN THE MIRROR.)
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BELIEVE ME--
--BUT I SWEAR BY THIS RIGHT HAND AND IN THE NAME OF THE LORD--
THE RIGHT HAND IS GOD'S HAND.
...HAS STOPPED.
THE SHIVERING...
THE LEFT...THE DEVIL'S.
I LOVE MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER.
I WANT THEM BACK THE WAY THEY WERE. PLEASE... HELP ME.
--I WILL PROTECT YOU WITH ALL MY BODY AND SOUL.
THAT WOULD BE MY WISH COME TRUE...EVEN IF YOU ARE ONLY A CON MAN IN PRIEST'S CLOTHING...
..."CROSS."

GUESS THERE'S NO ONE HOME.
OH, WELL...
GUESS AGAIN
BUT DON'T TRY TOO HARD.
WHAT A STRANGE GIRL.
105
Shunichi Matsuri
Hazuki Shizuha
TAXI
I'M HOME...
THE DOOR IS UNLOCKED.
WE'LL LEAVE AS SOON AS I HAVE A QUICK LOOK AROUND.
HEY! DON'T YOU THINK IT'S DANGEROUS TO RETURN TO MY HOUSE LIKE THIS?
SHE'S STILL HIDING SOMETHING.
GREAT. IN THE MEANTIME, I'LL GO PACK MY STUFF.


666

...THE ONE WHO'S REALLY IN DANGER IS...
SHIZUHA?!
WHAT'S WRONG!!?
WHAT IS THIS?!
THE ANTI-CROSS!!!
WHEN I FIRST SAW YOU, SHIZUHA--
--YOU WERE NOT IN YOUR RIGHT MIND.
YOU SEEMED AS IF YOU HAD JUST ESCAPED FROM SOME KIND OF RITUAL.
ALTHOUGH YOU SAY YOU WANT HELP FOR YOUR PARENTS...

SO, YOU ARE HAJIME BANSHO.
...BUT INSTEAD I GET A FLEDGLING, PRETTY-BOY EXORCIST.
I THOUGHT FOR SURE THAT FATHER GERARDO WOULD COME...
WELL, THIS IS A SURPRISE.

ARE YOU FINISHED GETTING READY, DAUGHTER?
MOTHER?!
EXCELLENT
THEN IT'S TIME FOR US TO GO.
SHIZU...
WELCOME HOME, SHIZUHA.

IF GOD'S WORDS ARE APPEARING ON HER SKIN--
--THEN SHE IS GOD'S MEDIUM.
AMAZING! THIS IS "SCRIPTURA COELESTIS."*
SCRIPTURA COELESTIS, SCRIPTURA TRANSITUS FLUVII, SECRET RUNES**, ENOCHIAN AND HEBREW.
THE WORDS APPEAR IN THESE VARIOUS FORMS OF HUMAN LANGUAGE, IN SENTENCES, AND SECRET CODES...
AS IT IS GOD'S WILL, THE MEANING OF A SINGLE WORD IS DIFFICULT TO DECIPHER, IMPOSSIBLE TO DECODE.
BUT IF ONE WERE TO ACTUALLY DISCOVER THE MEANING...

* Scriptura Coelestis, Scriptura Transitus Fluvii. Characters that were created in ancient times and the Middle Ages that take the place of alphabets.

** Secret Runes, Enochian, Hebrew: Magical letters from Scandinavia and Atlantis that served as a way to hide their real meaning.

I AM.
BUT THIS HERETIC CULT YOU'RE ASKING ABOUT...?
I HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT OURS IS A SIMPLE BLACK MAGIC STUDY GROUP. THE ANTI-CROSS AND THE SACRIFICIAL RITUAL ARE ONLY MAKE-BELIEVE. THEY'RE SIMPLY PART OF AN EFFORT TO COLLECT INFORMATION ABOUT HISTORICAL OCCULT EXPERIENCES.
SUCH A TERRIBLE LIAR.
BY THE WAY, THE GIRL LOOKS LIKE SHE'S IN BAD SHAPE. I SUGGEST YOU CHECK HER CLOSELY.

I...
I LOVE MY FATHER AND MOTHER.
BUT KILLING YOURSELF WITH A WEAPON GIVEN TO YOU BY YOUR PARENTS...
DON'T DO SUCH A TERRIBLE THING.

SHIZUHA...
SO, BASICALLY, THERE IS A CERTAIN GENTLEMAN WHO WISHES TO OBTAIN THIS GODDESS IN THE ROUGH--
--BUT I'M ASSUMING IT'S A WASTE OF TIME TO ASK A FINE YOUNG EXORCIST LIKE YOU TO RETURN HER TO US, RIGHT?
IT'S AN UNFORTUNATE COINCIDENCE THAT THIS HAPPENED TO OUR SACRIFICIAL LAMB...
IT'S JUST TOO BAD, REALLY.

HEAR ME!
I ORDER THEE BY THE SUPREME NAME OF THE ONE WHO CALLETH THE DEVIL...
OBEY MY COMMAND AND COME FORTH!!! ADONIA, EL ELOCHIM, EHEIE...

HOW PATHETIC. IF YOU CAN'T HAVE WHAT YOU WANT, YOU HYPNOTIZE IT TO KILL ITSELF.
BUT YOU'VE JUST SHORTENED YOUR OWN LIFE INSTEAD!!!
THAT'S ...

ドドド

WHA...?
GAK GAK
BANSHO...
D-DON'T...
...DON'T WANT TO...
...DIE...
LOOK AT YOU! YOU HAVE BECOME A CESSPOOL OF VILE SPIRITS! FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, YOU DIED LONG AGO.
THOSE WHO INDULGE IN THE POWER OF EVIL--
--SO SHALL THEY PERISH BY THE POWER OF EVIL!

IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, I COMMAND THEE--
--RETURN TO GEHENNA, FROM WHENCE YOU CAME, FOR ALL ETERNITY!

Holy Cross Academy High School
NO...
TAKARA AMAKUSA..
...KUN.
THAT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

—the Matsuri family left for Vatican City, where Father Gerardo's uncle Father Carlo lives
—in order to escape pursuit by the cult—
And so—

アーン
アーン
アーン
BUT I'M NOT LYING, MOMMY.
I'M TELLING YOU THERE WERE PEOPLE LOOKING AT ME FROM INSIDE THE MIRROR.
SO YOU BROKE IT?!
YOU'RE ALWAYS SAYING THE STRANGEST THINGS. ENOUGH ALREADY!
I'M SORRY, MOMMY...
I'M SO VERY SORRY...

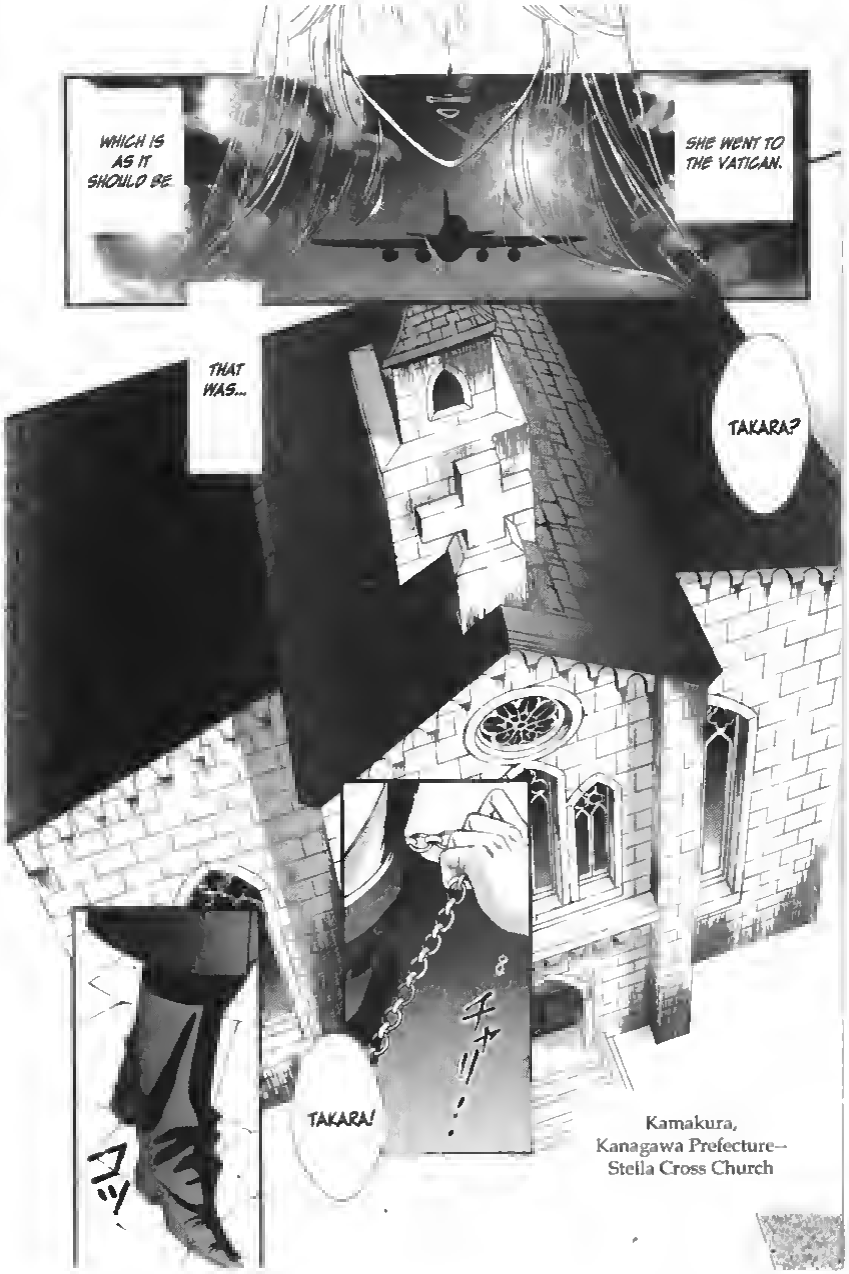
HELLO. I'M THE NEW ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR...
...SHIZUHA MATSURI.
I WAS WONDERING...
...WOULD MY FIRST SALARY CHECK COVER YOUR COMMISSION?
Amen

Mirror
Mirror
Mirror

You reflect the image of man.

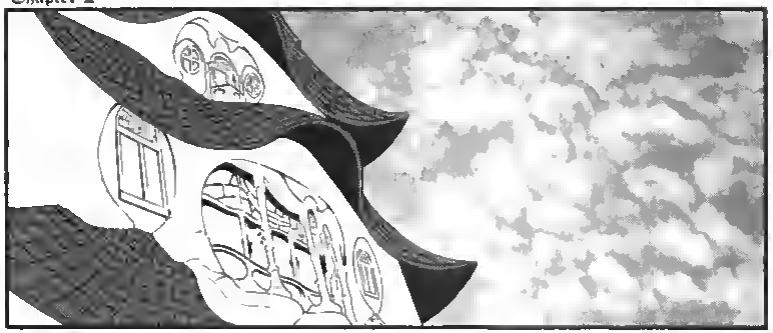
Midori
Midori
Midori

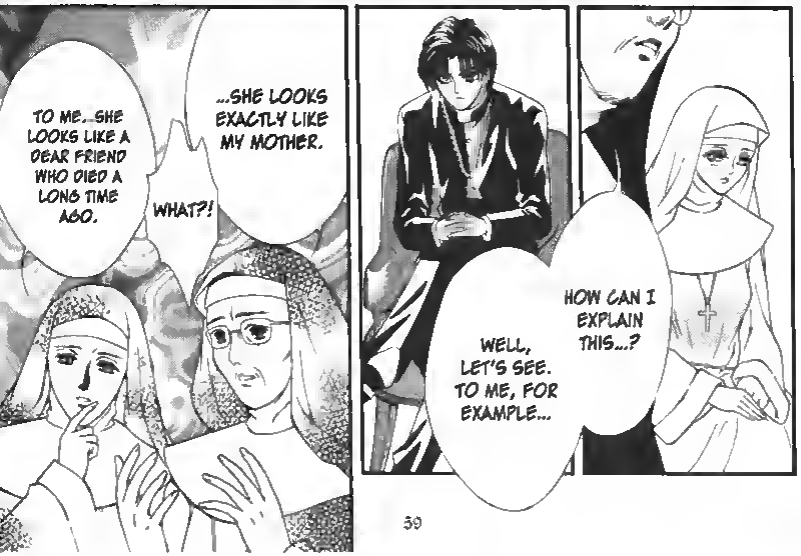
Do you reflect the soul of man?



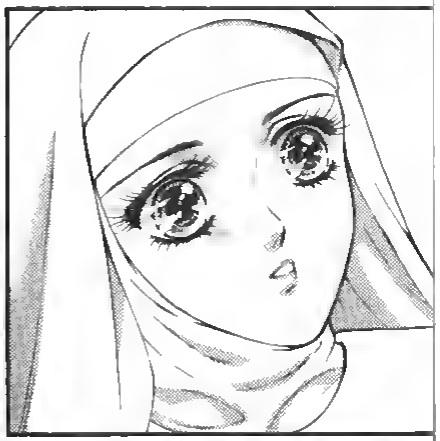
Kamakura,
Kanagawa Prefecture--
Stella Cross Church

HELLO, CROSS.
SHIZUHA?!
WELL, IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE THE MATSURI FAMILY LEFT FOR THE VATICAN.
I'M ASSUMING THEY MUST HAVE SETTLED DOWN A BIT BY NOW.
WHO KNOWS...




TO ME...SHE LOOKS LIKE A DEAR FRIEND WHO DIED A LONG TIME AGO.
WHAT?!
...SHE LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE MY MOTHER.
WELL, LET'S SEE. TO ME, FOR EXAMPLE...
HOW CAN I EXPLAIN THIS...?

IT...IT CAN'T BE...!
SHE'S IN VATICAN CITY NOW... ISN'T SHE?

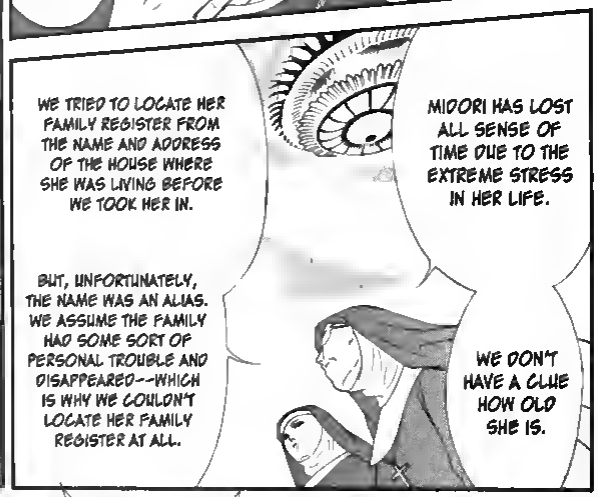


TAKARA, THIS IS...
THIS IS YOUR MOTHER.
SHE'S NOT SHIZUHA.
PLEASE--- WAIT!
ACTUALLY, THE REASON WE CAME TO YOU IS BECAUSE OF THIS WOMAN'S APPEARANCE.

TAKARA...
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
SHE... SHE...

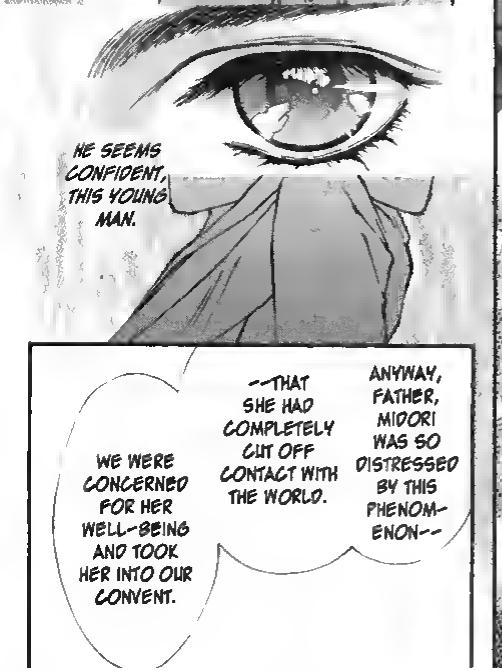
I WAS TOLD BY ONE OF THE NUNS THAT YOU TWO ARE EXORCISTS.
カリ
カリ

I HAVE NEVER SEEN A CASE LIKE THIS BEFORE.
TO BE HONEST, I'M AT A COMPLETE LOSS.
I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY...


WE TRIED TO LOCATE HER FAMILY REGISTER FROM THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE HOUSE WHERE SHE WAS LIVING BEFORE WE TOOK HER IN.
BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, THE NAME WAS AN ALIAS. WE ASSUME THE FAMILY HAD SOME SORT OF PERSONAL TROUBLE AND DISAPPEARED--WHICH IS WHY WE COULDN'T LOCATE HER FAMILY REGISTER AT ALL.
MIDORI HAS LOST ALL SENSE OF TIME DUE TO THE EXTREME STRESS IN HER LIFE.
WE DON'T HAVE A CLUE HOW OLD SHE IS.

I WANT TO KNOW WHO I REALLY AM!
IF THAT'S TRUE, I BEG YOU TO HELP ME.
YOU'RE MY LAST HOPE.

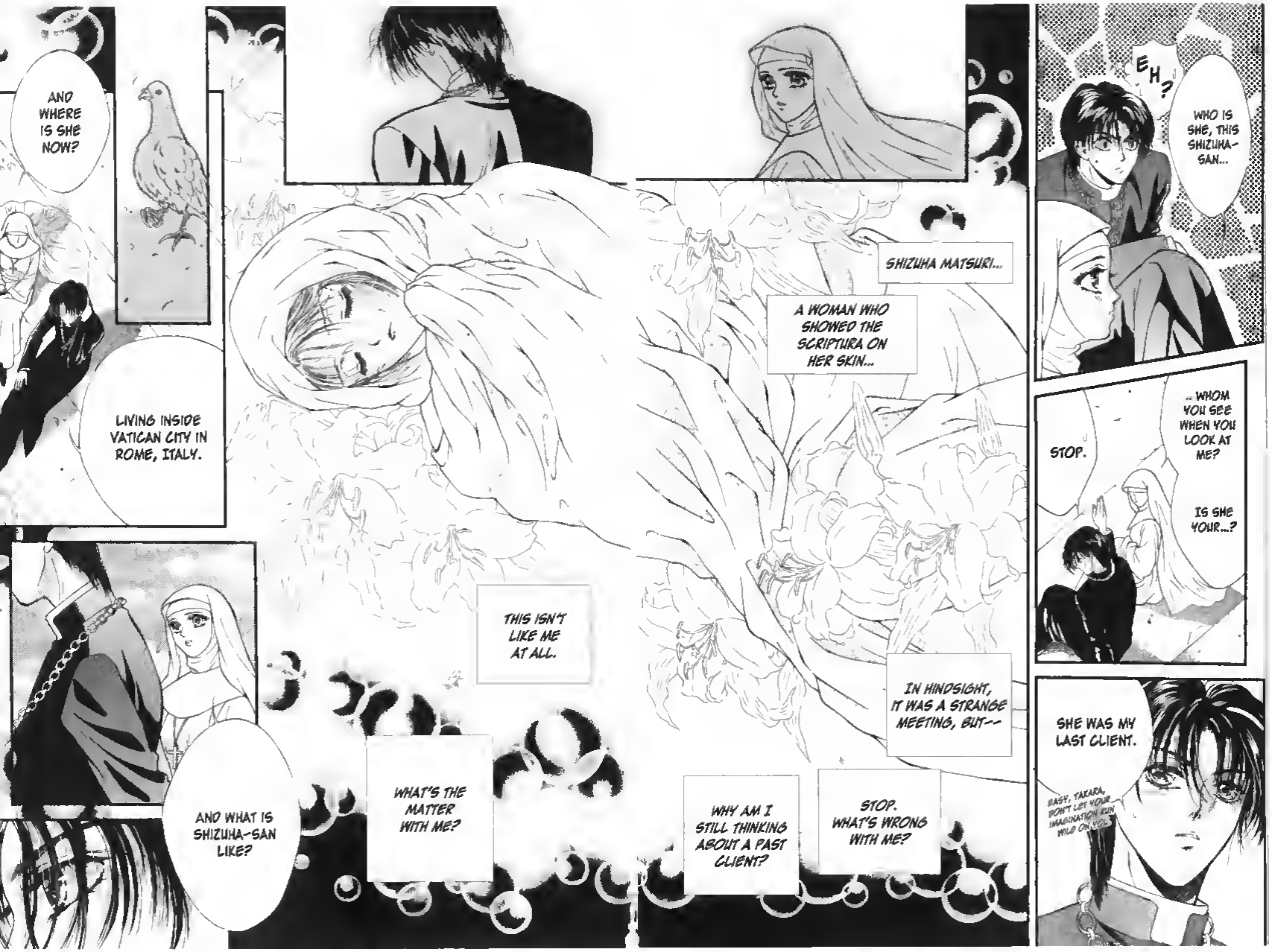
ハッキン
IT'S MIDORI.
THE CHARACTER FOR MIDORI IS THE ONE USED TO INDICATE DEEP-BLUE.
HOW STRONG HIS EYES ARE...


HE SEEMS CONFIDENT, THIS YOUNG MAN.
WE WERE CONCERNED FOR HER WELL-BEING AND TOOK HER INTO OUR CONVENT.
--THAT SHE HAD COMPLETELY CUT OFF CONTACT WITH THE WORLD.
ANYWAY, FATHER, MIDORI WAS SO DISTRESSED BY THIS PHENOM-ENON--

--AND, TO ANOTHER, SHE LOOKS LIKE A PARENT, A SISTER, OR A LOVER.
SO, TO ONE PERSON SHE RESEMBLES A FRIEND--
DEPENDING ON WHO IS LOOKING AT HER, SHE APPEARS AS A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON TO EACH.
NO ONE CAN SEE HER REAL SELF.
AND TO ME...
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

AH...
YOU'RE WEAK. EXHAUSTED...
YOU SHOULD SIT DOWN.

I CANNOT EVEN SEE PEOPLE'S SKIN.
IT'S SO HORRIBLE TO BE ME...
PLEASE, TAKARA-SAN--!
I SENSE NO EVIL SPIRIT WITHIN HER THAT'S TYPICAL OF DEMONIC POSSESSION

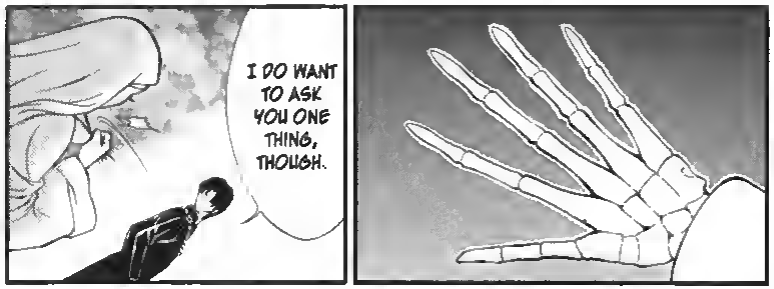

AND WHERE IS SHE NOW?
LIVING INSIDE VATICAN CITY IN ROME, ITALY.
AND WHAT IS SHIZUHA-SAN LIKE?
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH ME?
THIS ISN'T LIKE ME AT ALL.
SHIZUHA MATSUKI...
A WOMAN WHO SHOWED THE SCRIPTURA ON HER SKIN...
IN HINDSIGHT, IT WAS A STRANGE MEETING, BUT--
STOP. WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?
WHY AM I STILL THINKING ABOUT A PAST CLIENT?
EH?
WHO IS SHE, THIS SHIZUHA-SAN...
STOP.
.. WHOM YOU SEE WHEN YOU LOOK AT ME?
IS SHE YOUR...?
SHE WAS MY LAST CLIENT.
BASH, TAKARA, DON'T LET YOUR IMAGINATION RUN WILD ON YOU.

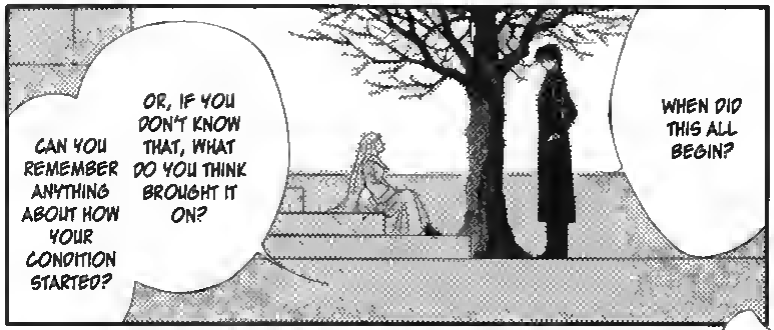
WHO CAN SAY?
IS SHE BEAUTIFUL, THIS SHIZUHA-SAN?

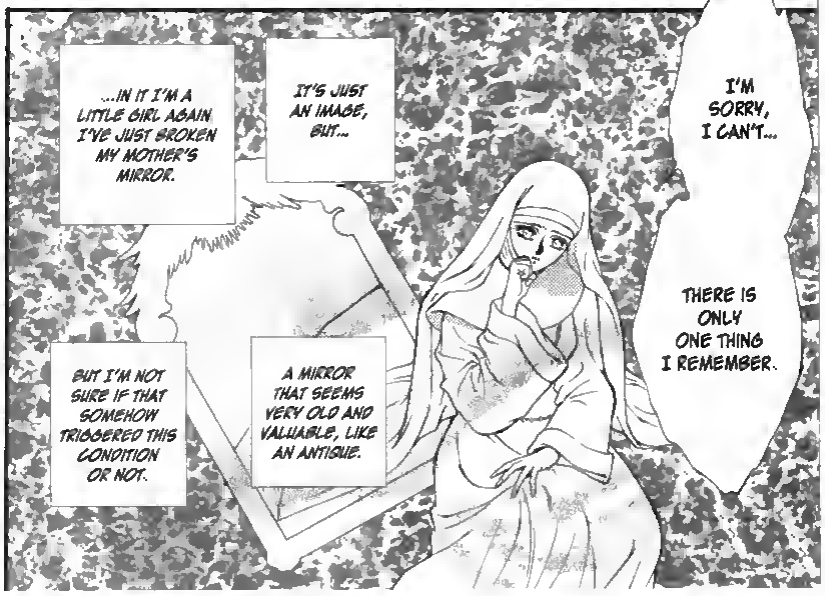
すぅうう
THIS IS A MAN WHO SPEAKS HIS MIND.
SHE'S RECKLESS, THOUGHTLESS, AND HEADSTRONG.
BUT ALSO VERY ODD. ALL IN ALL, A REAL STRANGE GIRL.
All of which means pretty much the same thing.

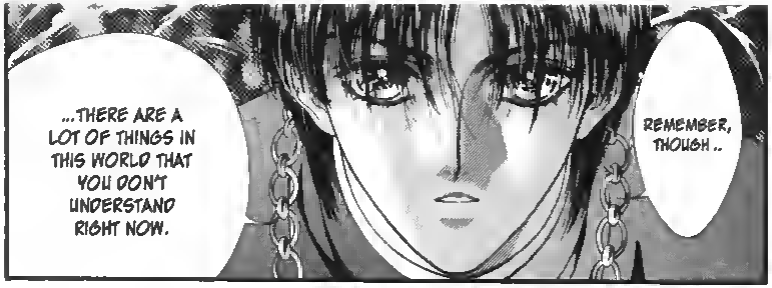
WHY DOES THIS WOMAN APPEAR THAT WAY TO ME?
I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND IT.
SHIZUHA'S FACE...
WHY?!
SHIZUHA'S VOICE...
"THAT WOULD BE MY WISH COME TRUE...EVEN IF YOU ARE ONLY A CON MAN IN PRIEST'S CLOTHING."

HMMM...
A MIRROR...
PERHAPS THE HOUSE WHERE SHE WAS LIVING IN SECLUSION...
IF IT'S STILL THERE UNTOUCHED, IT SHOULD BE EASY ENOUGH TO INVESTIGATE.
YAAAAA?!
DON'T WORRY. IT'S ONLY A PIGEON.

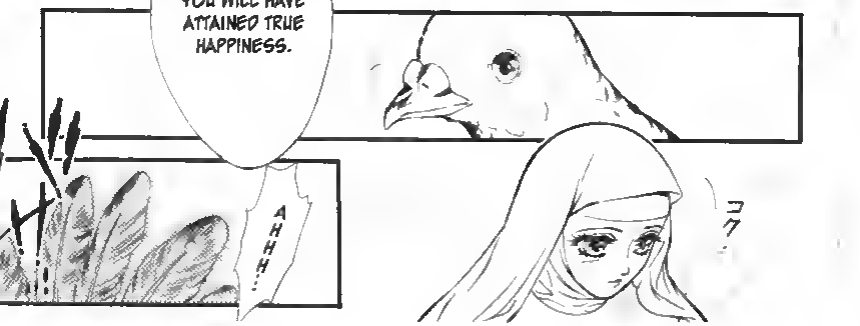

I DO WANT TO ASK YOU ONE THING, THOUGH.

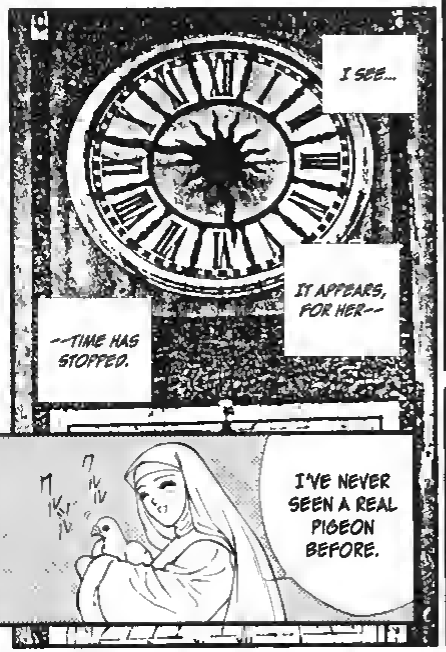

CAN YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT HOW YOUR CONDITION STARTED?
OR, IF YOU DON'T KNOW THAT, WHAT DO YOU THINK BROUGHT IT ON?
WHEN DID THIS ALL BEGIN?


...IN IT I'M A LITTLE GIRL AGAIN I'VE JUST BROKEN MY MOTHER'S MIRROR.
IT'S JUST AN IMAGE, BUT...
I'M SORRY, I CAN'T...
THERE IS ONLY ONE THING I REMEMBER.
BUT I'M NOT SURE IF THAT SOMEHOW TRIGGERED THIS CONDITION OR NOT.
A MIRROR THAT SEEMS VERY OLD AND VALUABLE, LIKE AN ANTIQUE.


...THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS IN THIS WORLD THAT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND RIGHT NOW.
REMEMBER, THOUGH..

NOT EVERYTHING IN THIS WORLD IS SAFE AND HAPPY, BUT THIS WAY YOU'LL MEET A LOT OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE.
HELP THEM IF THEY NEED IT. LET THEM HELP YOU.
WHEN THINGS THAT ARE FRESH AND NEW TO YOU NOW FINALLY BECOME ORDINARY--
--THAT'S WHEN YOU WILL HAVE ATTAINED TRUE HAPPINESS.
WHEN YOU FINALLY RECOVER YOUR TRUE SELF--
--I WANT YOU TO TAKE YOUR TIME WHEN YOU START TO VENTURE OUT. DO IT SLOWLY.


AHHH!
ヨク!


I SEE...
IT APPEARS, FOR HER--
--TIME HAS STOPPED.
I'VE NEVER SEEN A REAL PIGEON BEFORE.

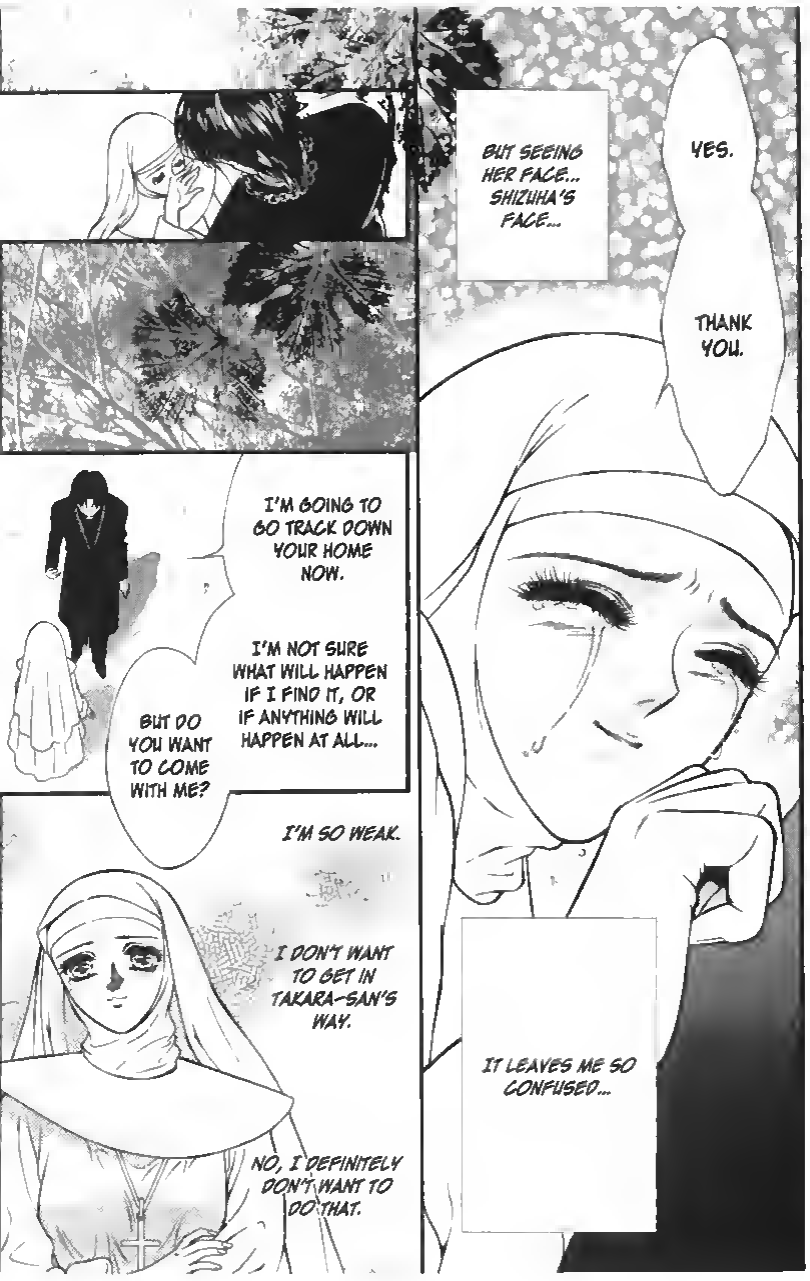
SHE SEEMS SO INNOCENT...
...ALMOST LIKE A CHILD.

THAT, AND THAT YOU ALSO LOOK PEOPLE STRAIGHT IN THE EYE.
FOR SOMEONE WHO HAS LIVED IN SECLUSION FOR SO LONG, YOU SURE DO TALK A LOT.
DON'T BE EMBARRASSED. THAT'S WHAT I REALLY LIKE MOST ABOUT YOU.

YOU KNOW, MIDORI...

WHY DOES MY BODY FEEL SO HEAVY...?
I'M SUDDENLY SO TIRED...
I...JUST...

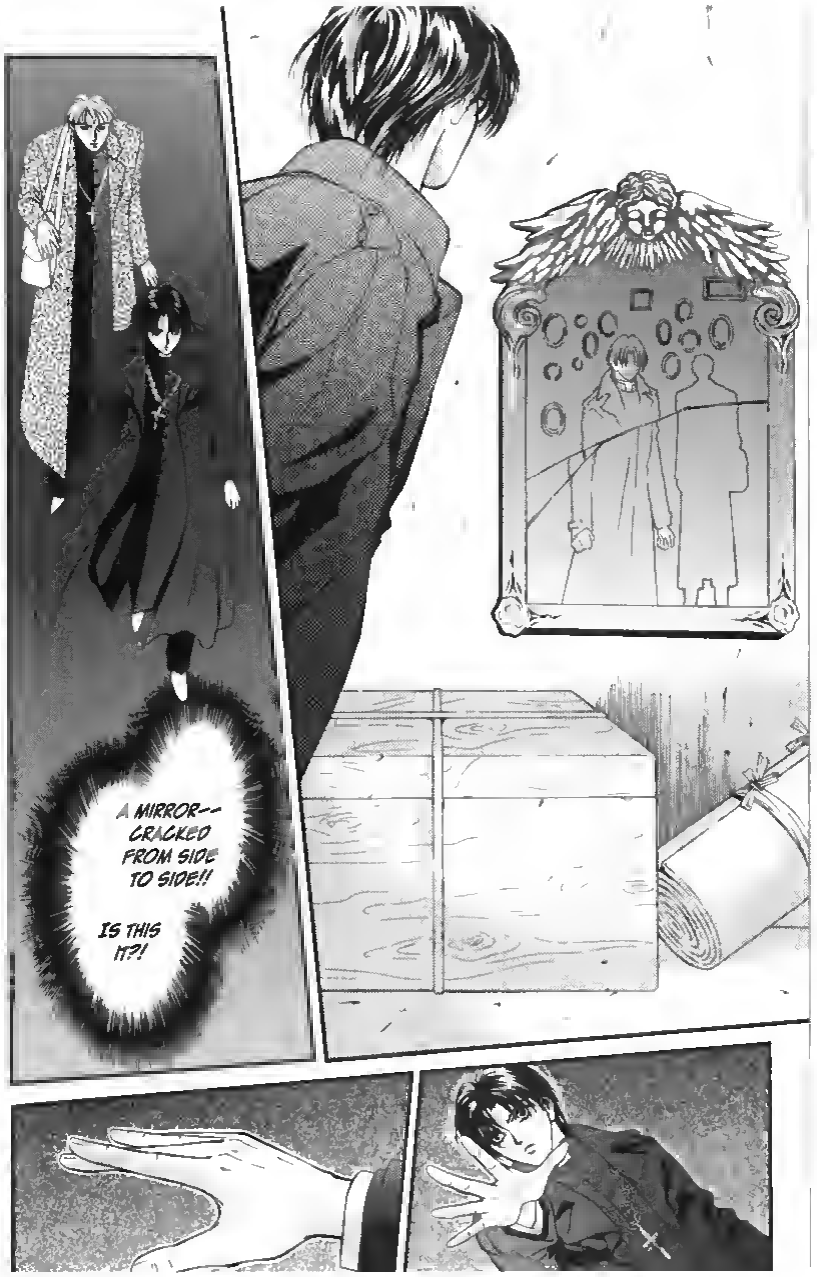
SHI--


BUT SEEING HER FACE... SHIZUHA'S FACE...
YES.
THANK YOU.
I'M GOING TO GO TRACK DOWN YOUR HOME NOW.
I'M NOT SURE WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I FIND IT, OR IF ANYTHING WILL HAPPEN AT ALL...
BUT DO YOU WANT TO COME WITH ME?
I'M SO WEAK.
I DON'T WANT TO GET IN TAKARA-SAN'S WAY.
NO, I DEFINITELY DON'T WANT TO DO THAT.
IT LEAVES ME SO CONFUSED...

MY FATHER AND I WILL...
DON'T WORRY.
DON'T CRY.
PLEASE DON'T CRY, MIDORI.
WE'LL HELP YOU UNCOVER YOUR TRUE SELF. I PROMISE.

TAKARA!

NO, I WILL WAIT...
WELL, THIS IS THE PLACE.

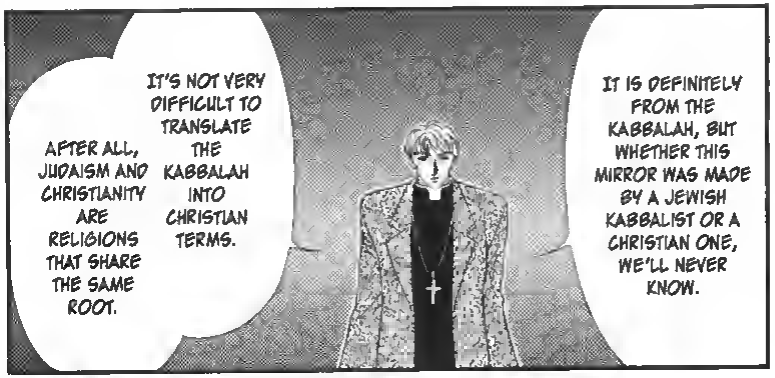

A MIRROR--
CRACKED
FROM SIDE
TO SIDE!!
IS THIS
IT?!

SO IT'S A MAGIC MIRROR?!
THAT'S RIGHT.
A MIRROR WHERE AN IMAGE THAT IS HIDDEN WITHIN IT APPEARS ONLY UNDER A CERTAIN REFLECTION OF LIGHT.
SINCE IT'S SUCH AN ANTIQUE, I THOUGHT THAT MIGHT BE THE CASE.
AND LOOK AT THIS! THESE ARE THE FOUR LETTERS THAT SIGNIFY THE LORD... YOD HE WAW HE.
THIS IS THE TETRAGRAMMATON.

DAD...?
THERE'S NO TRACE OF THE DEVIL OR EVIL SPIRITS WITHIN THE MIRROR.
AND YET...
...I FEEL A STRONG REMNANT OF OTHER PEOPLE'S THOUGHTS...
...AS IF THEY WERE PIERCING INTO MY BRAIN!
OH...?!

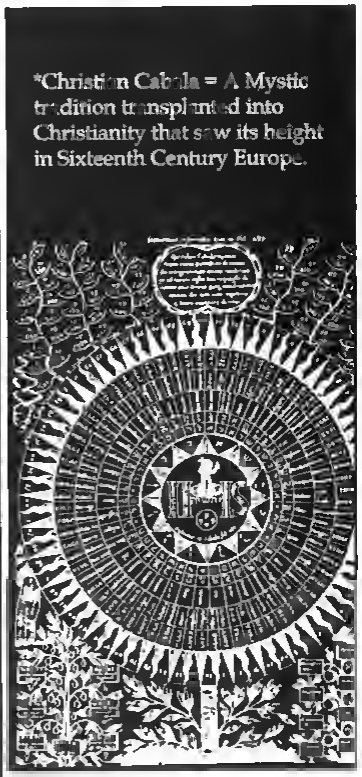
--THEN IT COULD BE THAT THIS INCIDENT HAPPENED BECAUSE OF HER.
EVEN IF THAT'S TRUE, I DON'T WANT MIDORI-SAN TO FEEL UNHAPPY ABOUT IT.
MAYBE IT'S ALL TOO CONVENIENT --
THESE THINGS DON'T JUST HAPPEN TO ANYBODY AT RANDOM. IF MIDORI-SAN POSSESSES SOME KIND OF INNATE POWER OVER MAN'S PSYCHE--
--BUT SHE DID LET ME SEE SOMEONE THAT I CAN ONLY SEE IN MY DREAMS...
SO, IS IT DIVINE PUNISHMENT--

I THINK I UNDER-STAND NOW...
BECAUSE MIDORI BROKE THIS MIRROR--
--SHE LOST HER APPEARANCE, HER SENSE OF SELF...
THAT WAS THE PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE.


IT'S NOT VERY DIFFICULT TO TRANSLATE THE KABBALAH INTO CHRISTIAN TERMS.
AFTER ALL, JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY ARE RELIGIONS THAT SHARE THE SAME ROOT.
IT IS DEFINITELY FROM THE KABBALAH, BUT WHETHER THIS MIRROR WAS MADE BY A JEWISH KABBALIST OR A CHRISTIAN ONE, WE'LL NEVER KNOW.

--PEOPLE HAD INSTEAD CONSECRATED* AND WORSHIPPED THIS MIRROR--
--IT IS POSSIBLE THAT IN PLACE OF GOD'S IMAGE--
--WHICH WAS THE INSCRIPTION OF GOD'S NAME CARVED UPON IT.

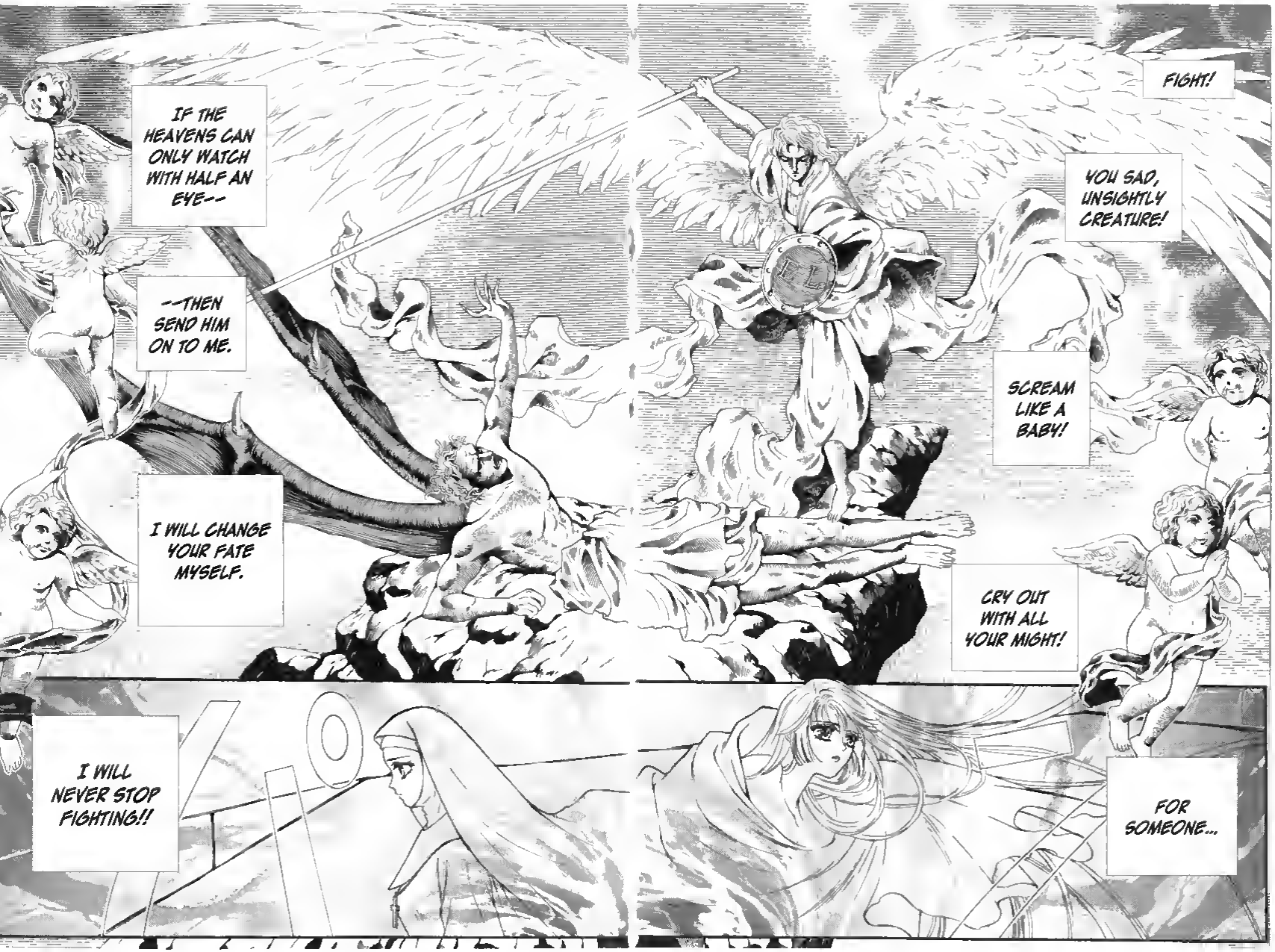
*To consecrate (consecration) - To sanctify or make holy Christian term.



OH, ELOCHIM, EL VAH, JAHOVAH ELOCHIM...
OH, EHEIEH AIN SOF JEHOVAH...
...ADONAI!
JEHOVAH TZABAOTH ELOCHIM TZABAOTH!
SHADDAI EL CHAI...

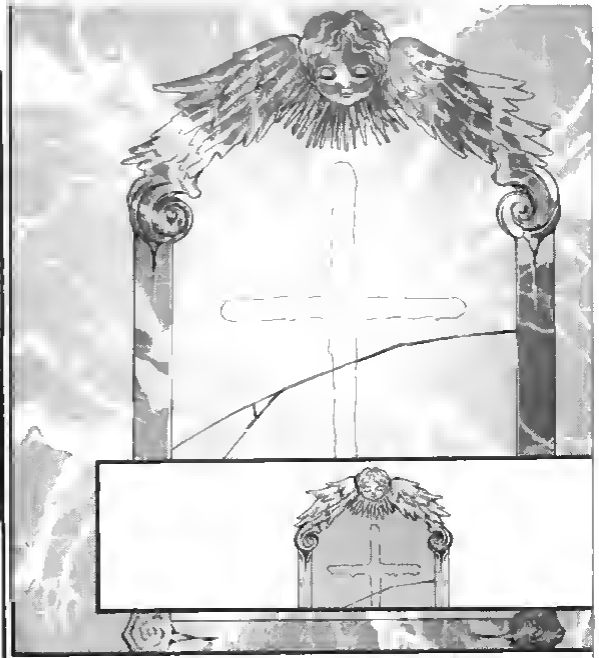
--DO YOU THINK I COULD TAKE HER PLACE?
DAD?
I MEAN...
IF I WERE TO BREAK THIS MIRROR RIGHT NOW--
--WHO WOULD YOU HAVE SEEN ME AS THEN?
IF I HAD THE COURAGE TO SEEK HELP SOONER, TAKARA-SAN--
AND IF I RECOVER MY OWN APPEARANCE, THEN HOW WILL YOU LOOK AT ME?
...I AM IN LO...
TAKARA-SAN...

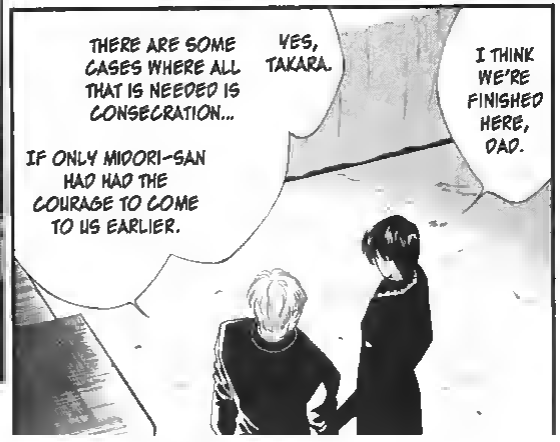
IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST...
...AMEN.
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
FORGIVE ME, LORD, FOR INVOKING THY HOLY NAME.
I PRAY TO THEE FOR THY FORGIVENESS FOR THE POOR LAMB WHO HATH SINNED.
OUR FATHER, WHO ART IN HEAVEN...
KYRIE ELEISON. (LORD HAVE MERCY.)
CHRISTE ELEISON. (CHRIST HAVE MERCY.)
KYRIE ELEISON. (LORD HAVE MERCY.)


IF THE HEAVENS CAN ONLY WATCH WITH HALF AN EYE--
--THEN SEND HIM ON TO ME.
I WILL CHANGE YOUR FATE MYSELF.
I WILL NEVER STOP FIGHTING!!
FIGHT!
YOU SAD, UNSIGHTLY CREATURE!
SCREAM LIKE A BABY!
CRY OUT WITH ALL YOUR MIGHT!
FOR SOMEONE...

I'M GLAD FOR YOU.
AND, FRANKLY, I'M KIND'A EXCITED, TOO!
I MEAN, YOU SAW MOM, DIDN'T YOU?
GO TO HER...
AND WHO DID YOU SEE, MY SON?
キィィィ
YEAH, DAD, I THINK I WILL GO SEE HER.
MIDORI-SAN SAID SHE'LL BE WAITING FOR ME.
カーン...

BUT MIDORI-SAN SHOULD FINALLY BE FREE OF THE NIGHTMARISH PHENOMENON NOW.
SO, DAD, DO YOU HAVE MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT OUR SUCCESS?
WELL...?



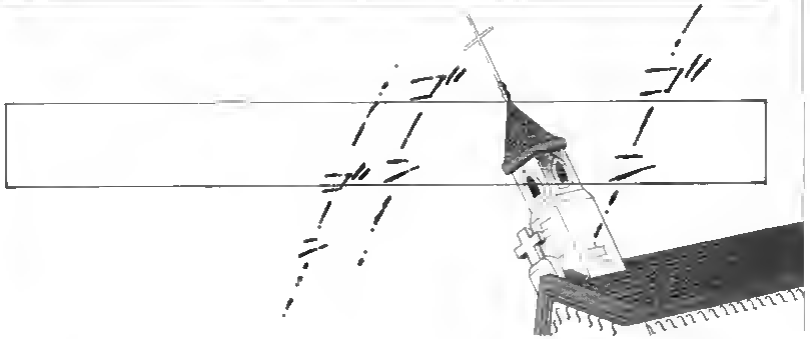

THERE ARE SOME CASES WHERE ALL THAT IS NEEDED IS CONSECRATION...
IF ONLY MIDORI-SAN HAD HAD THE COURAGE TO COME TO US EARLIER.
YES, TAKARA.
I THINK WE'RE FINISHED HERE, DAD.

TAKARA-SAN... YOU'RE HERE...
STOP THAT...
YOUR LIFE STARTS NOW...
I KNEW IT IN MY HEART.
THE REASON THAT I WAS REFLECTING A PERSON'S IMAGE LIKE A MIRROR--
--WAS BECAUSE THAT PERSON LIVES SECURELY IN SOMEONE'S SOUL
MIDORI!!!
THINGS ARE JUST BEGINNING FOR YOU NOW!!

SUCH KIND EYES...

SO TELL ME THE TRUTH...
AM I AS PRETTY AS SHIZUHA-SAN?
YES...
YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL.

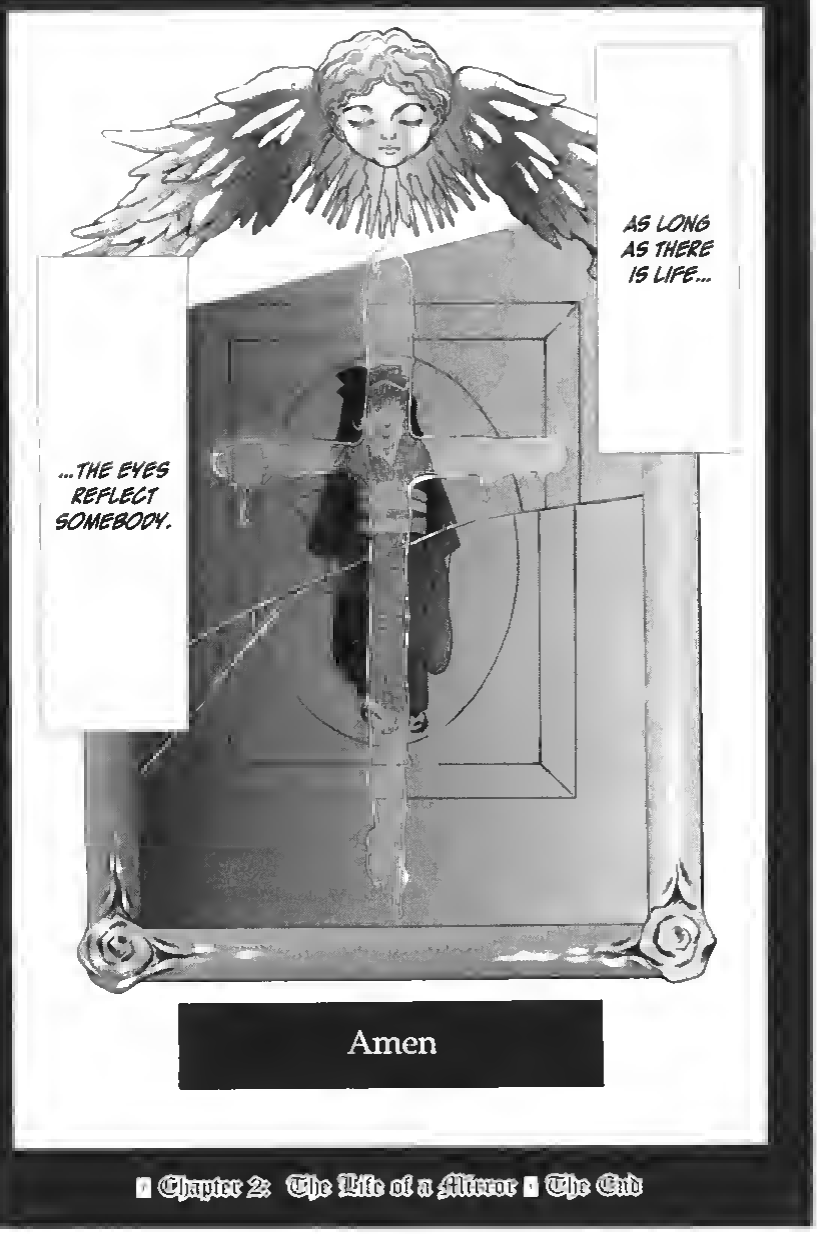
TAKARA AMAKUSA...
...KUN.
EVERY-BODY...



THE EYES GAZE AT SOMEBODY, AND REFLECT SOMEBODY.
EVERYBODY HAS A MIRROR.

Chapter 3

Passion



Chapter 3
The Shape of a Crime,
The Form of a Lie

Kamakura, Kanagawa Prefecture--
Holy Cross Academy High School

SO, HERE WE ARE AGAIN, MISTER EXORCIST...
...FATHER TAKARA AMAKUSA-KUN...
SHIZUHA, WHY DID YOU LEAVE THE VATICAN?

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
Preparation Room
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE...
...SHIZUHA MATSURI?
DON'T YOU MEAN...
...SENSEI"?

I TELL YOU I DON'T WANT ANY OF IT!!
OR SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE AS A SYMBOL OF THE CHURCH, AND BECAUSE OF THAT, LOSE MY FREEDOM?!
WELL, IT'S BETTER THAN BEING HUNTED BY HERETICAL FANATICS, ISN'T IT?
LOOK, IF YOU CAME BACK JUST TO LET ME HAVE A PIECE OF YOUR MIND, YOU'RE DONE.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO BACK TO VATICAN CITY?
ALL THOSE ORACULAR LETTERS THAT APPEAR ON MY SKIN...
THE...WHAT DID THEY CALL IT, SCRIPTURA...?
THEN THE TALK STARTED GETTING BIGGER AND BIGGER. THEY STARTED MENTIONING NAMES LIKE THE SACRED COLLEGE OF CARDINALS*.
THEY TOLD ME IT MIGHT BE A MIRACLE.
SO WHAT WOULD HAPPEN THEN? I MEAN, ONCE THE INQUIRY DECIDES THAT I'M FOR REAL? DO THEY CALL ME A DIVINER? DO I GET TO BECOME A SAINT AFTER I DIE?
WELL, I...
...I WAS ALMOST PUT THROUGH AN INQUIRY BY THE VATICAN CHURCH.
SO I HEARD. THE VATICAN'S FATHER CARLO WROTE TO US.
YOU'RE SO MATTER-OF-FACT ABOUT THIS. YOU KNEW THAT THIS WOULD HAPPEN!
THE SISTERS SAW IT.

* A group of cardinals who act as consultants for the Pope (the highest position for priests) in the Roman Catholic Church

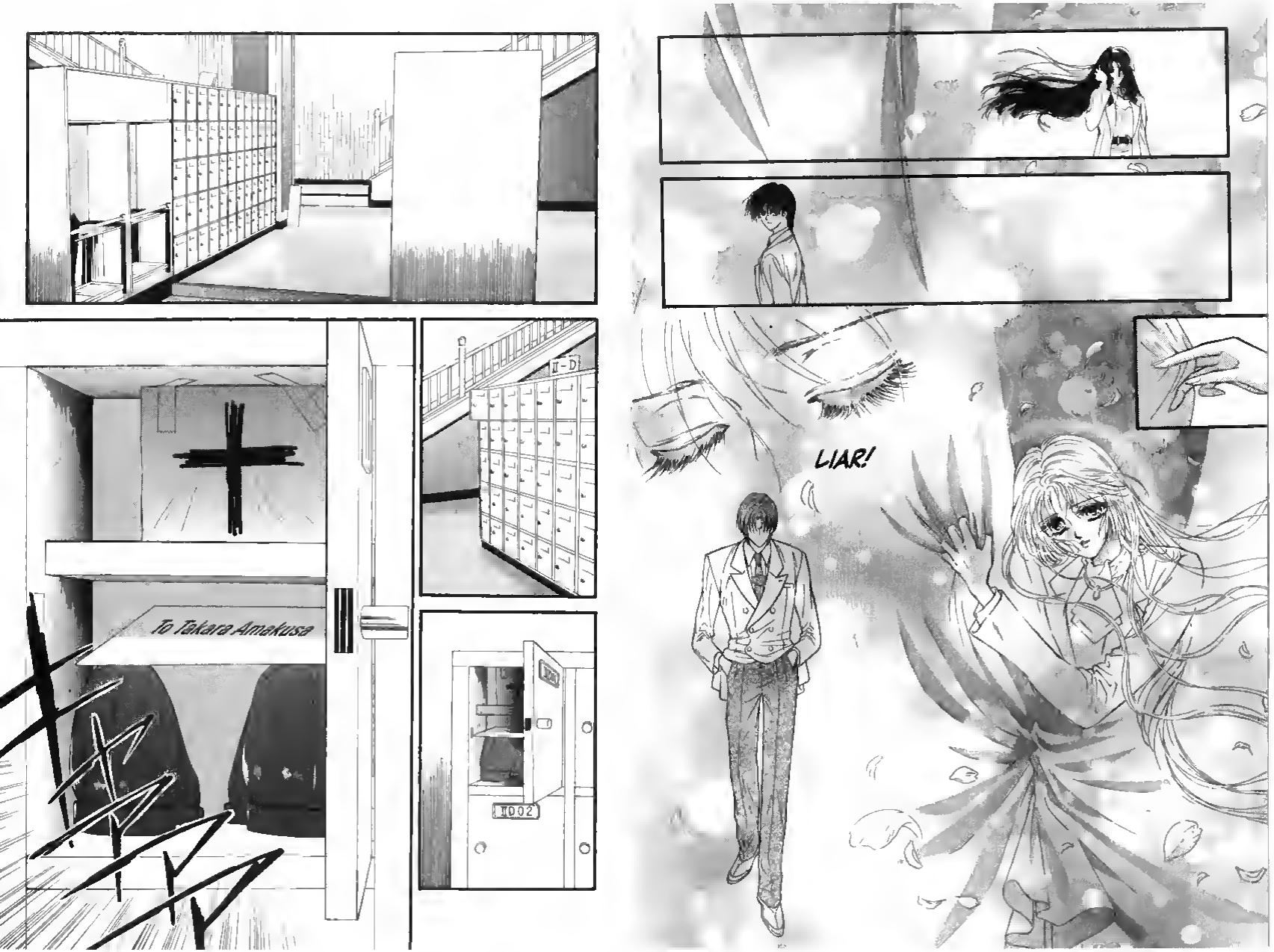
I JUST CAME TO SAY... THANK YOU.
NO.
NO, WAIT.
WAIT!
THAT'S NOT IT! THAT'S NOT WHY I'M HERE.

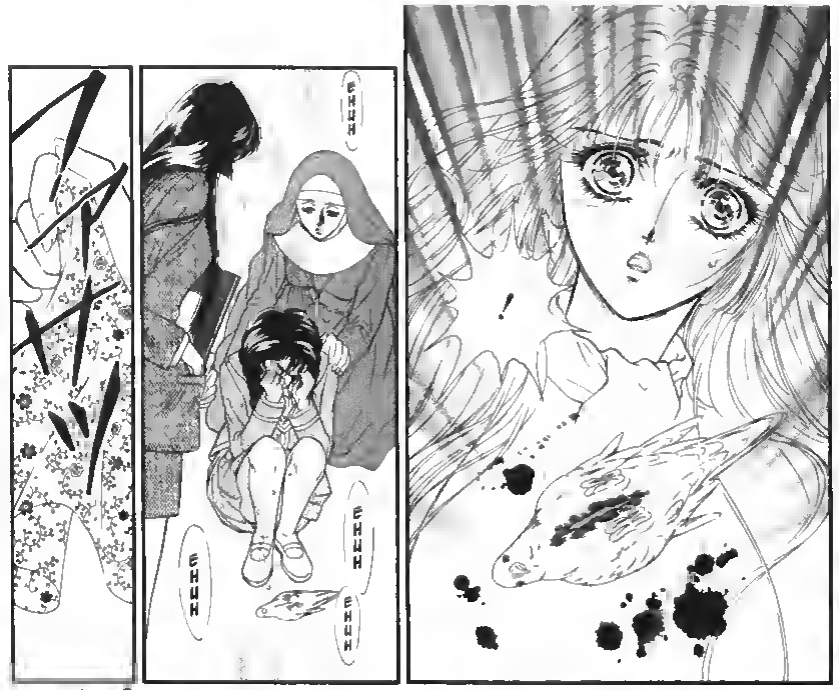
AND MORE THAN THAT...
NOW, THAT I'M A TEACHER...?
MY JOB IS OVER.
YOU DON'T NEED ME TO PROTECT YOU ANYMORE.
DOES IT HURT...
...HERE?
NO.
WHY CAN'T I SAY WHAT I FEEL?
MAYBE, UNCONSCIOUSLY, I'VE BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO SPEAKING MORE FROM MY HEAD THAN MY HEART.
STILL, THIS ISN'T SOMETHING THAT CAN BE EXPRESSED BY LOGIC.
WHEN I LEFT TAKARA, I FELT AS THOUGH MY HEART WAS BEING TORN APART.
WHEN I LEFT JAPAN, I FELT A VAGUE NOTHINGNESS LIKE--
NO. ENOUGH! I'M GETTING CARRIED AWAY.
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO SAY...TO A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT WHO'S FIVE YEARS MY JUNIOR?
DEEP INSIDE, I KNEW THAT I WAS TURNING MY BACK ON SOMETHING IMPORTANT.

"SOMEONE TO PROTECT..."

AARGH! I THOUGHT HE HAD FORGOTTEN.
YOU WISH.
I'M NOT LYING.
OH, WELL, THEN...UNTIL I RECEIVE MY FEE...
...I LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR FIRST PAYDAY, "MATSURI-SENSEI."

I KNOW. I'M THE ONE THAT CHOSE TO EXCHANGE THE SAFETY OF A SANCTUARY FOR FREEDOM.
BUT DON'T MISUNDERSTAND ME. I DIDN'T DO IT TO HAVE MY OWN WAY OR TO AVOID AN OBLIGATION. I JUST COULDN'T STAND HAVING MY FUTURE DECIDED FOR ME.
I DON'T WANT OTHER PEOPLE TO DECIDE WHO I SHOULD BE OR WHAT I SHOULD DO. I WANT TO FIND MY OWN PATH.
THAT'S WHY...
ENOUGH! WHAT YOU THINK DOESN'T MATTER HERE.
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, I INTEND TO SEND YOU BACK TO THAT SANCTUARY.
YOUR PARENTS ARE STILL IN VATICAN CITY, RIGHT?
AND THE PERSON TO WHOM WE ENTRUSTED YOU, FATHER CARLO...
HE'S A FIRST-RATE EXORCIST.
THERE IS NO ONE WHO CAN BETTER PROTECT YOU!!


II-D
To Takara Amakusa
LIAR!


EHUH
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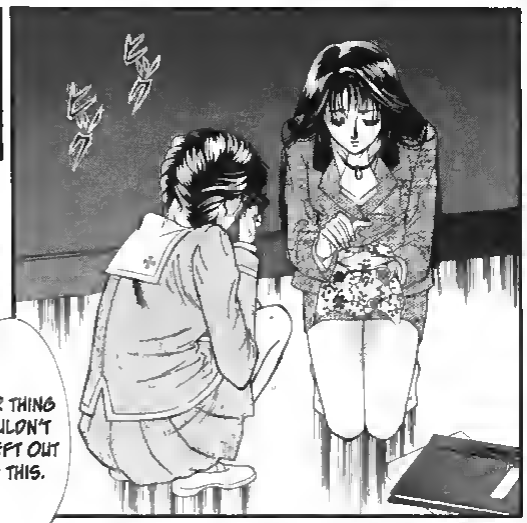

POOR THING SHOULDN'T BE LEFT OUT LIKE THIS.

OH, NO, IT'S HAPPENED AGAIN.
THIS TIME IT WAS THAT SENIOR'S BIRD.
YOU KNOW, THAT REALLY BEAUTIFUL GIRL, SHINA OBARI-SENPAI...?
THE POOR THING WAS DISEMBOWELED ...
...AND THEY DRAINED ALL ITS BLOOD, AS WELL.
CAN YOU THINK OF ANYTHING MORE CRUEL?
WHY....?
WHY HERE...?
WHY WOULD ANYONE DO SUCH A TERRIBLE THING...?
WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
AH, MATSURI-SENSEI.

OH, AMAKUSA-KUN...

WHAT?
--AH!

WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO HELP YOU BURY HER?
OH, MATSURI-SENSEI...
...THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR--

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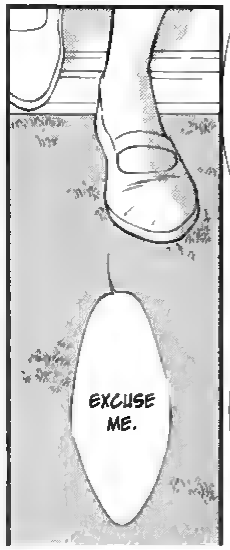
ニオーン
ニオーン
ニオーン
ハッ

YOU LOOKING FOR MY PASSENGER HERE, BY ANY CHANCE?
OH...!
フニ
WHERE ARE YOU?
WHERE DID YOU GO, YOU IRRITATING THING?
CAN YOU EVEN BRING A CAT ONTO CAMPUS WITHOUT PERMISSION?
BUT I FOUND A STUDENT WHO COULD KEEP HIM.
I'M SO GLAD YOU BROUGHT HIM BACK. HE'S A STRAY.
YOU HEARD THEY FOUND ANOTHER DEAD ANIMAL THIS MORNING, DIDN'T YOU?
SO, WHO DO YOU THINK IS KILLING THOSE POOR THINGS?
WHO WOULD PERPETRATE SUCH ACTS OF CRUELTY?
.....
APPARENTLY, THEY REPORTED THE KILLINGS TO THE POLICE A WHILE AGO, BUT...
IT WAS BY THE STAIRS ON THE FIRST FLOOR. THEY SAID IT WAS A CAT, SO I WAS WORRIED...
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
Preparation Room
フィン フィン フィン
Teachers' Office
WHAT? ONE OF THE SENIOR CLASS BOYS HAS DIED IN A CAR ACCIDENT?!
YES! WE JUST GOT A CALL!
トゥルルルル
トゥルルルル
OH?

OBARI-SAN.
MATSURI-SENSEI, ABOUT THE OTHER DAY...I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU.
I'VE BROUGHT YOU...A NEW HANDKERCHIEF.
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THAT.

*The person with the most attitude wins

I DIDN'T LIE TO YOU. I WAS A COLLEGE STUDENT TAKING A TEACHER'S EMPLOYMENT EXAMINATION.
I NEVER SAID I WAS TAKING A HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE EXAM. OR DO YOU REALLY THINK I LOOK LIKE A JUNIOR HIGH STUDENT?



YOU KNOW, MOST OF MY CLIENTS NORMALLY IDENTIFY THEMSELVES AND COOPERATE WITH THE INVESTIGATION.
STILL, PASSING THE EXAM IS ONE OF THE STIPULATIONS OF EMPLOYMENT.
THIS IS A PRIVATE SCHOOL. THAT SHOULDN'T MATTER.
YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE DONE NOTHING BUT..
STOP THIS HAIR-BRAINED ARGUMENT!
I COULDN'T HELP IT!!
YOU'RE TALKING TO A TEACHER, YOU KNOW!

HOW SAD...
...TO HAVE DIED SO YOUNG...
HE STUDIED SO HARD.
YES, AT THE TOP OF HIS CLASS.
HOW COULD I...
...AT A TIME LIKE THIS...
I'M TELLING YOU, THAT'S DEFINITELY PLASTIC SURGERY.
STOP THAT! THIS IS A FUNERAL!

AMAKUSA-KUN, WAIT.
DID YOU READ MY LETTER?
UH HUH.
I NEED TO TALK TO YOU AFTER SCHOOL, OBARI-SENPAI.
I'LL WAIT FOR YOU AT THE PARK, THEN.
THAT WILL BE FINE.

UNBELIEV-ABLE.
WHAT? SO THOSE KIDS JUST WENT ON WITH THEIR LIVES LIKE NOTHING EVER HAPPENED?
THEY WERE CHARGED WITH INFLICTING GRIEVOUS BODILY HARM AND BROUGHT TO COURT.
WHEN SHE FINALLY STOOD UP TO THEM, THEY STOLE SOME SULFURIC ACID FROM THE CHEMISTRY LAB AND THREW IT ON HER FACE.
YES...FOR THREE DAYS.
BUT IT TURNED OUT THE POLICE HAD INTERROGATED THEM VERY AGGRESSIVELY. THEIR CRAFTY LAWYER TURNED THE CASE INTO A MATTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THE KIDS PLED INNOCENT, AND FAMILY COURT ACTUALLY BOUGHT IT.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

DID SHE FOLLOW ME HERE?!
Y'KNOW, IT'S NOT LIKE THAT. I MEAN, SHE'S NOT LIKE THAT.
SHE WAS BULLIED ALL THE TIME IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL--
--BY A CERTAIN GROUP OF NEANDERTHAL CREEPS!
AND NOW SHE LOOKS LIKE A DIFFERENT PERSON. I MEAN, SHE MUST HAVE SPENT MILLIONS TO CHANGE HER FACE.
BUT YOU SAID YOU WENT TO THE SAME JUNIOR HIGH WITH HER AND SHOWED ME GRADUATION PICTURES.
STOP IT!
THAT GIRL ...!

WELL, ON THE FOURTH DAY, AFTER THEY WERE CLEARED...
...THOSE KIDS STARTED DYING, ONE BY ONE.
WHAT!?
NOTHING WAS MADE CLEAR--
--BUT THOSE DEATHS HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE DEAD ANIMALS AROUND THE SCHOOL.
ANYWAY, THAT WAS WHEN HER FACE CHANGED. WITH EACH SURGERY, SHE BECAME MORE BEAUTIFUL, AND EVERYONE WITH WHOM SHE HAD TROUBLE STARTED TO DIE...
OUCH!
WHAT?
WHEN DID I CUT MYSELF? I DON'T REMEMBER!

WHICH IS GOOD...
THE "TEACH" HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS.
I MEAN, IF THERE WAS NOTHING BETWEEN YOU AND MATSURI-SENSEI...
...THEN I GUESS THERE WAS NO REASON FOR ME TO BE JEALOUS.
NOTHING...
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
HMMM, SINCE YOU'RE NOT RESISTING, DOES THAT MEAN I CAN GET MY HOPES UP?
I'M GLAD...

...CONSIDERING I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU...

AMAKUSA-KUN...
...OVER HERE!

YOU KNOW, FOR THE SENIOR WHO DIED TODAY...?
UH HUH.
I WENT TO THE MEMORIAL SERVICE.

...LIKE SHIZUHA'S HAIR FROM THE VEIL...
THAT SMELL...
DON'T MOVE, TAKARA-KUN.
IF YOU DO, EVEN AN INCH, I'LL CUT THE SENSEI LYING OVER THERE INTO PIECES.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HER?!

SHIZUHA!!
"SHIZUHA"...
DAMN YOU...
STUPID, "SENSEI."
WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST DO WHAT I ORDERED YOU TO DO?
I TOLD YOU TO DEAL WITH HER AS SOON AS YOU FOUND HER.
YOU USELESS PIECES OF CRAP!!
The Scriptura
BUT THIS CHICK...
--BUT LOOK AT HER NOW!!
I MEAN, SHE LOOKED LIKE A TASTY PIECE WHEN WE FIRST SAW HER--
LOOK! I'M SERIOUS! IT'S DISGUSTING!!
THEY'VE STARTED TO APPEAR ALL OVER HER BODY...
THESE WEIRD WORMY SYMBOLS --?!
SO WHAT?! I DON'T CARE.
JUST GET YOUR ASS OVER HERE...
...AND GRAB SOME METAL CABLES FROM THE VAN YOU BROUGHT HER HERE IN.

...HOW MUCH PAIN ARE YOU ARE WILLING TO SUFFER FOR HER?
YEE-HAA!
INRI
KU
...UNGH...
LET ME SEE...
I HAVE THE POWER TO KILL PEOPLE WITHOUT GETTING MY OWN HANDS DIRTY.
AS I SAID BEFORE, IF YOU TRY TO RESIST ME, I WILL KILL MATSURI-SENSEI.

I'D HATE TO HAVE TO RUIN THAT PRETTY FACE OF YOURS.
YOU BETTER GIVE UP SOON, THOUGH.
YOU'RE JUST NOT WILLING TO DIE, ARE YOU?
DAMN!!
INRI

AH...
WHAT?
I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN ABOUT THEM. GUESS I REALLY DON'T NEED THEM ANY MORE!
YOU KILLED THEM WITH A CURSE...
...TAKARA AMAKUSA.
I WANT YOU TO MAKE A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL WITH ME.
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME...?
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
YOU'RE TOUGH-- BOTH PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY.
OTHER MEN WON'T DO FOR THIS. IT HAS TO BE YOU...

YOU STARTED BY CURSING ALL THE ONES THAT HURT YOU, DIDN'T YOU?
BUT NOW IT'S DIFFERENT.
NOW THE POWER HAS BECOME A TOY TO SATISFY YOUR OWN DESIRES.
SO YOU KNOW.
YES...
THAT'S RIGHT.
THE ONES WHO LAUGHED AT ME AND BULLIED ME...
...AND DIS-FIGURED ME...
...AND WERE FOUND INNOCENT.
THE IDIOT WHO DIDN'T EVEN KNOW MY NAME WHEN HE THOUGHT I WAS UGLY--
--AND THEN CHASED AFTER ME LIKE A PUPPY WHEN HE DISCOVERED I WAS BEAUTIFUL.
ALL THE CONCEITED COCKROACHES WHO DARED TO WORK AGAINST ME, AND THE STUPID FLIES WHO PLEADED FOR THEIR LIVES AS THEY FLOCKED AROUND ME.
THEY ALL DIED AS A RESULT OF THE CURSE I LEARNED TO DISTRACT MYSELF FROM MY TROUBLES...
WHAT A LAUGH!
WATCHING ALL THOSE OCCULT FILMS... LEARNING THE CHANTS... THE CURSES...WHO KNEW I HAD SUCH TALENT?
SO YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THOSE DEAD ANIMALS AROUND SCHOOL.
YOU TOOK THE HEARTS OF THE ANIMALS TO FEED YOUR POWERFUL CURSES.
LEAVING THE CARCASSES OUT WAS A WARNING TO THOSE WHO MIGHT THINK TO STAND AGAINST YOU.
ANIMALS ARE SO CUTE, AREN'T THEY?
THE MORE OF THEM I KILL, THE MORE BEAUTIFUL I BECOME.
I SUPPOSE THIS IS SOME KIND OF RECYCLING OF LIFE?
WOULDN'T YOU AGREE?!

I SHOULD ALWAYS GO WITH MY FIRST INSTINCTS.
JUST AS I THOUGHT, YOU HAD THE "MAGIC NAIL" ON YOU THE WHOLE TIME.
NOW COME ON. LET'S BOTH MAKE A CONTRACT WITH THE DEVIL AND SEAL OUR FATE.
THERE WILL ONLY BE THE TWO OF US 'TIL THE END OF TIME
--I WILL SOON BE THE ONLY ONE FOR YOU.
EVEN IF YOU DON'T LOVE ME NOW--
INSIDE THIS FIGURINE --
--THERE IS A STRAND OF HAIR FROM SOMEBODY VERY, VERY DEAR TO YOU.
IF YOU DON'T WANT HER KILLED, YOU'LL DO AS I SAY.
YOU'VE SEEN THAT MY CURSES ARE FOR REAL.
THIS ICON DOESN'T LOSE POWER SIMPLY BECAUSE SOMEONE SEES IT. I CAN SUCCEED WITH THE SIMPLEST ITEMS AVAILABLE TO ME
YOU KNOW SOMETHING, SISTER? YOU'RE FULL OF CRAP.
WHO'S FALLING FOR WHOM?
SERIOUSLY, DID YOU REALLY THINK THAT I WAS BEING THIS PASSIVE JUST TO SAVE THAT GIRL?

WHAT?!
NO! TH-THAT'S A LIE!
COULD THAT REALLY BE WHY HE WAS SO PASSIVE?!
JUST TO FIND THE MAGIC NAIL?
IS IT REALLY TRUE...
...HE HAS NO FEELINGS FOR MATSURI-SENSEI!?
"I WILL NO LONGER PROTECT YOU."
WHAT --?!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
NO! DON'T! THAT'S STEEL CABLE...!
IT WILL RIP YOUR ARMS CLEAN OFF!!
TAKARA!!!

SHIZUHA...
...WATCH!
HEY...
WHY ARE YOU CRYING?

ボーン

Deus

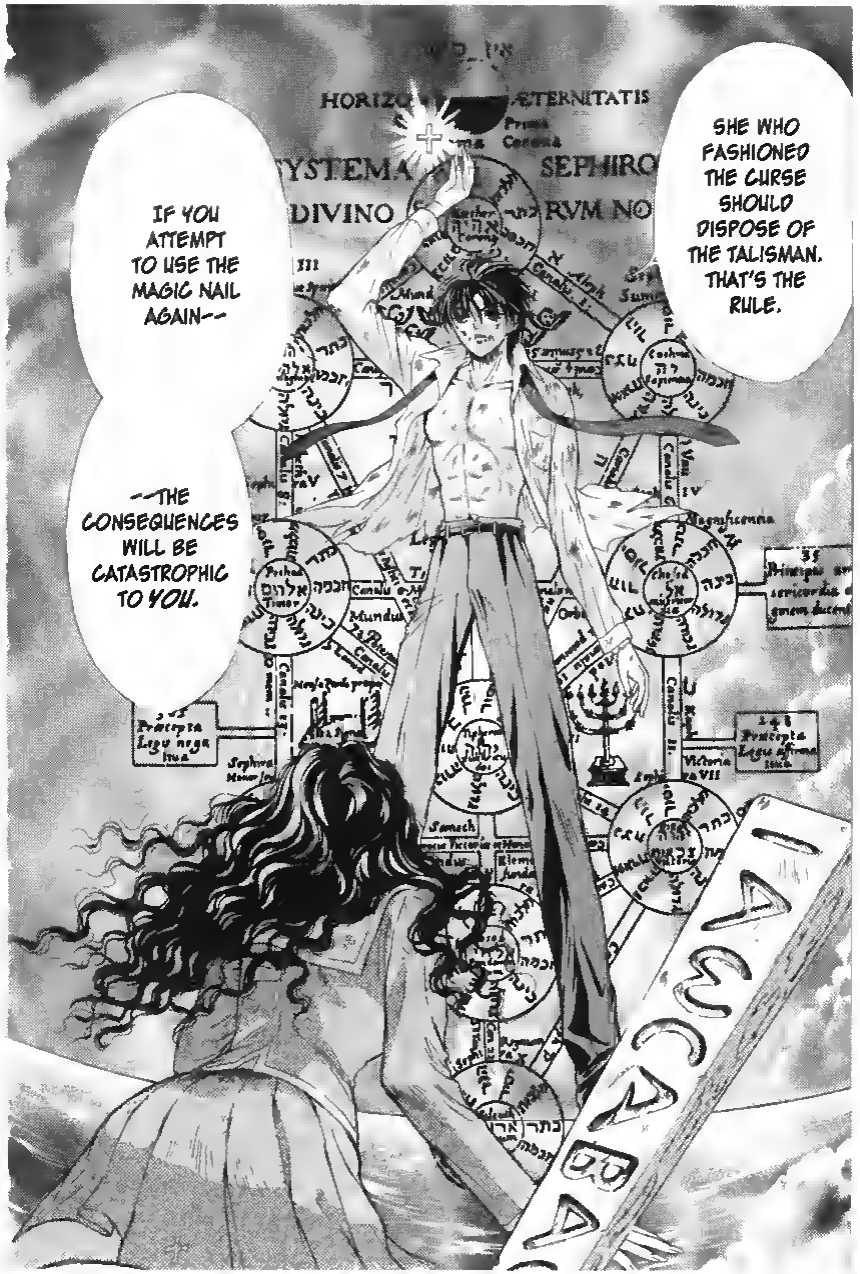
Deus

Deus

Gloria IX Gloria in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus t

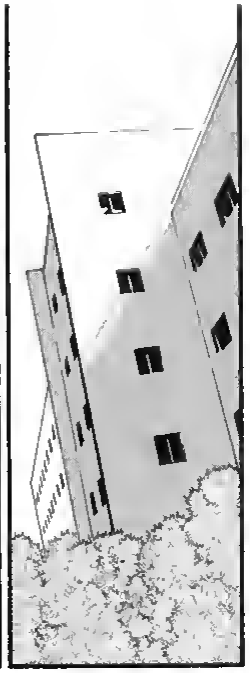
KYAA AAAA AAA!!!
WHA--?! IT'S... MELTING?!
THE MAGIC NAIL!!

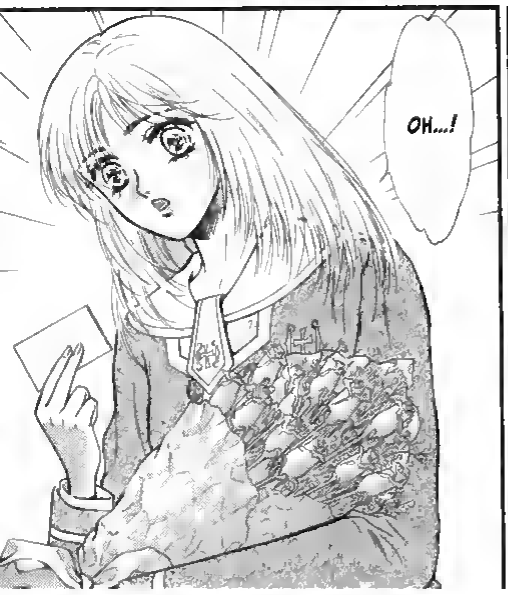
TSS
WHAT?
LET'S GO.
BUT...
IT'S OKAY.
CAN YOU WALK, SHIZUHA?
I'M FINE.


IF YOU ATTEMPT TO USE THE MAGIC NAIL AGAIN--
--THE CONSEQUENCES WILL BE CATASTROPHIC TO YOU.
SHE WHO FASHIONED THE CURSE SHOULD DISPOSE OF THE TALISMAN. THAT'S THE RULE.

YES...
"...I WILL NO LONGER PROTECT YOU."
...BUT I'M PRETTY GROSS IN MY OWN WAY.
Whether what happened then is the truth or a lie...
GUESS IT WAS PRETTY GRUESOME, WASN'T IT...?
HER CRIMES CANNOT BE JUDGED BY HUMAN LAW.
"I...!"

STRANGEST CASE I'VE EVER SEEN-- THE MOST BIZARRE DISEASE. NO ONE KNOWS WHAT CAUSES IT, BUT THE SKIN ON HER HANDS LOOKS LIKE THAT OF A BIRD'S SKIN, HER PUPILS CONTRACT LIKE CAT'S EYES--
HAVE YOU SEEN THE PATIENT IN ROOM 101?
--AND, EVERY DAY, SOME NEW SYMPTOM APPEARS.
IT'S ALMOST LIKE GOD IS PUNISHING HER FOR SOMETHING.

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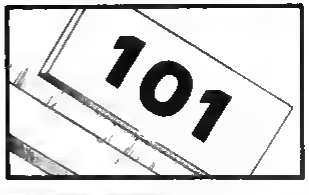
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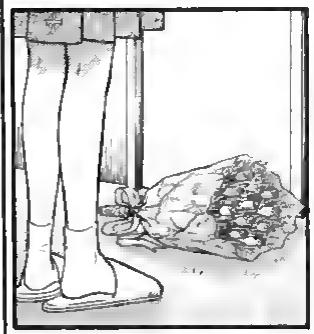
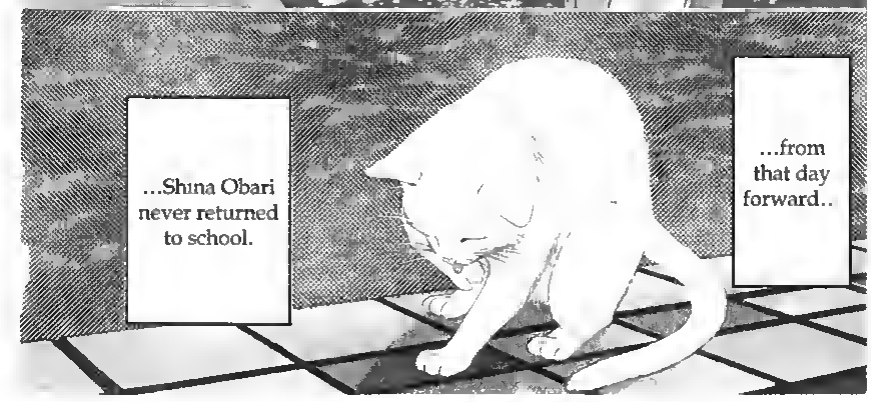



...Shina Obari never returned to school.
...from that day forward..

CROSS

CROSS†ONESELF

クロスの経典

The Scripture of CROSS

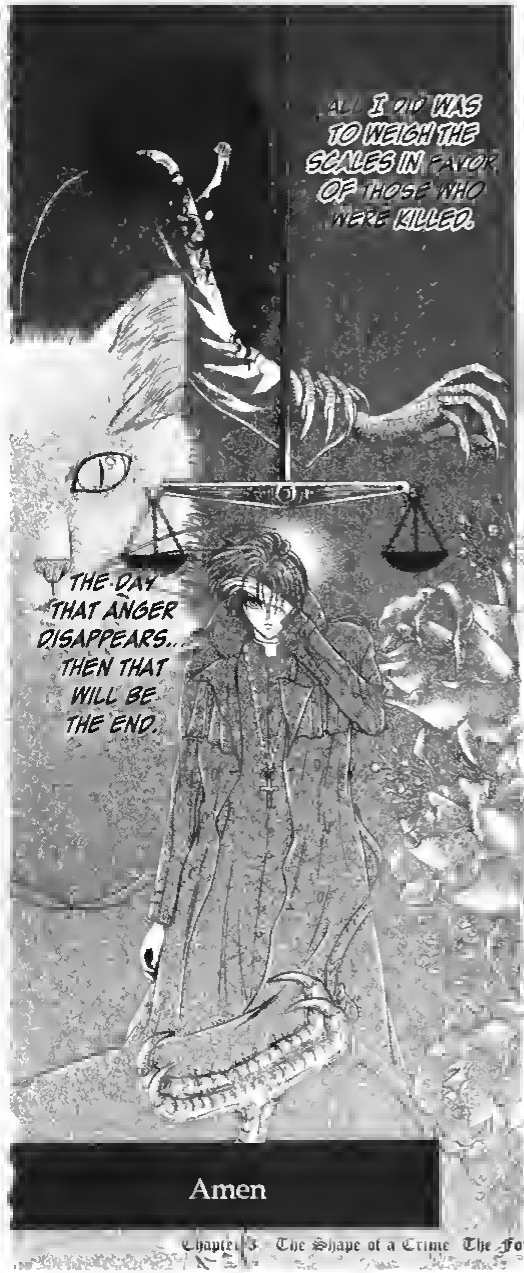
We've provided a quick reference to the religious terms that appear in "Cross" here in "The Scripture of Cross." By reading this, you can plunge further into the world of "Cross" and enjoy it even more!

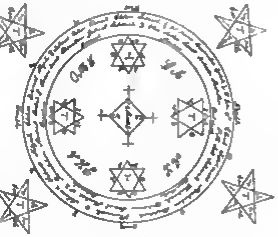
Thou shalt now open the pages of the scripture and study the meaning of the words contained therein.

キ†アーメン

Amen

In Christianity, "Amen" is a word said at the end of a prayer as one crosses oneself. It originates from the Hebrew word meaning "So be it" and expresses affirmation of one's prayer and belief. It is the first word spoken by Takara Amakusa.


ALL I DID WAS TO WEIGH THE SCALES IN FAVOR OF THOSE WHO WERE KILLED.
THE DAY THAT ANGER DISAPPEARS... THEN THAT WILL BE THE END.
Amen

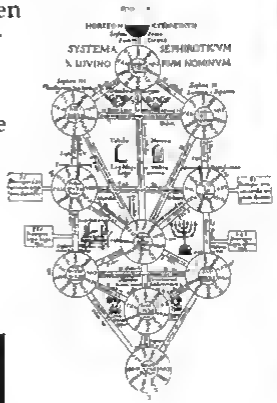


The Magic Circle from the Lesser Key of Solomon
What did he want to summom?

カ十カバラの魔法陣

The Magic Circle of Kabbalah

In Judaism, the word Kabbalah means "something handed down" or tradition. It is the most esoteric of the mystical secret philosophies that deal with the complexities of the cosmos, as well as philosophies that have been handed down verbally for over a thousand years. The Magic Circle drawn on the cloth that Shizuha Matsuri was wearing in Chapter One is a kind of mandala that signifies the balance of the soul found in a grimoire, or a small handbook called the "Lesser Key of Solomon." It is used to summon the Devil. The Tree of Life, or sephirot, describes the mystic world view, and it is used to explain the basic concept of the mysteries of all things.



悪十逆十字架

Anti-cross

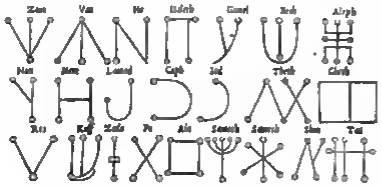
An Anti-cross with the Devil's number "666" inscribed on the serpent's head

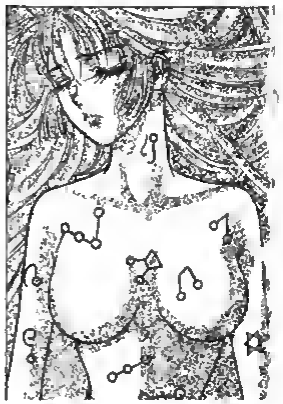
An item used by Devil worshippers to perform evil rituals and black magic. The cross is upside down to symbolize the rebellion against the God of Christianity. It also comes from carrying out rituals that are deliberately reverse or blasphemies of Christian rituals. In this story, it is used as a symbol of an anti-Christian heretic group. The true identity of the group is as yet unknown.

静十天国の聖文字

Scriptura

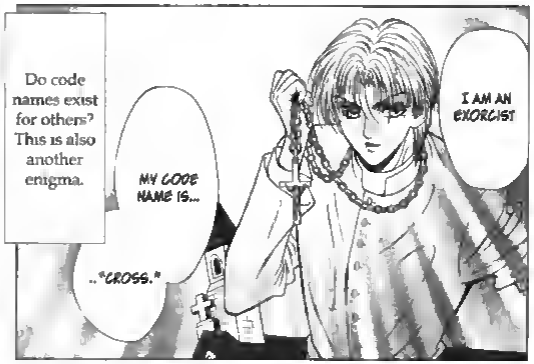
A collective term pointing to oracular writing that appears on Shizuha's body. How and why the letters appear on her skin is still unknown. Sometimes called "the words of God," "the will of God" or "the Prophecy," the meaning of the writing has not been deciphered.





十悪魔祓師

Exorcist



Currently in the Roman Catholic Church, exorcism can be performed only under particular conditions. It must be performed by a qualified exorcist approved by the Pope, with the permission of the bishop of the particular parish where the exorcism is to take place.
The word exorcism comes from the Greek word "exousia," which means to expel.
An exorcist must "be careful not to fall into the craft of the Devil." In any case, Takara's exorcism skills are extraordinary.

現

聖十字架

Holy Cross

The mysterious cross that appears from Takara's forehead as he crosses himself when he performs exorcism, etc. Its name, material, function and powers are all unknown at this point. Its appears with some bleeding, and leaves a bruise on Takara's forehead in the shape of a cross. Perhaps its existence has something to do with Takara's birth. Stay tuned for future developments!

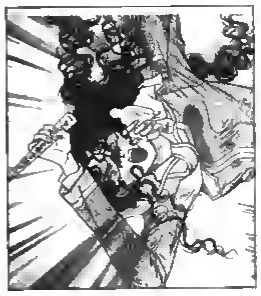
Is it a gift from God, or some secret of Takara's?

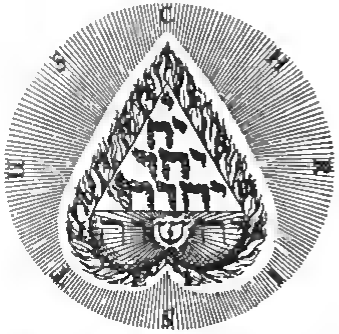
第十呪魔の釘

Magic Nail

The item used to cast a curse that belonged to Shina Obari in Chapter Three.
A Magic Nail can be effective as a protection against diseases and calamities. It is also used to assault people by causing disease, accidents and death. In casting a spell, some part of the subjects (hair, nail, blood, etc.) is placed in something that symbolizes life, such as a doll or animal carcass, and the nail is driven through with a spell.

A 19th Century rubbing of the four sides of a Magic Nail at Collegio Romano.





第十テトラグラマトン

Tetragrammaton
God's name

The name of God made up of the four Hebrew letters, Yod, He, Waw, He or YHWH, which appeared in the mirror that Midori cracked in Chapter Two. In general it is pronounced Yahweh, but the true pronunciation of the name is unknown. It is believed that the reason that God was expressed this way was due to the fact that the worship of any image of God was forbidden.

悪十悪魔憑依体

Demoniac

It points to a person that has been possessed by the Devil (evil spirit). Possession is a state when a living human gives his body up to a supernatural being such as God, the Devil or any other spirit for a time.
If the medium controls the spirit, it is called possession; if the spirit controls the medium, it is called obsession.
Hajime Bansho of Chapter One was a case of possession.

Shizuha's father's patient was killed by obsession by the Devil

Horribly transfigured Bansho

POSTSCRIPT

THANK YOU FOR READING VOLUME ONE OF *CROSS*. YOUR SUPPORT FOR TAKARA AND SHIZUHA IS MOST APPRECIATED!

ABOUT *CROSS*:

AT FIRST, I WAS APPROACHED TO WRITE A ONE-TIME STORY WITH A POSSIBILITY OF MAKING IT INTO A SERIES. I'M SO GLAD IT BECAME A SERIES...(LAUGHS) THANKS TO THE READERS, TAKARA DIDN'T HAVE TO GO INTO AN INDEFINITE SLUMBER. (LAUGHS) THE STORY WAS SOMETHING THAT I HAD STOWED AWAY FOR A LONG TIME, BUT THE ORIGINAL SETTING WAS PRETTY DIFFERENT. IN THE ORIGINAL SCENARIO, TAKARA'S NAME WAS DIFFERENT, AND SHIZUHA WAS A CHILDHOOD FRIEND OF TAKARA'S. WHEN DID IT ALL CHANGE? ACTUALLY, IT GOT COMBINED WITH ANOTHER ONE OF MY STOCK IDEAS. BUT I, WHO LIKES INNOCENTLY SEXY YOUNG GIRLS, DECIDED TO GO FOR THE "OLDER HEROINE, A FEMALE TEACHER!" (SOUNDS LIKE A SETUP FOR AN X-RATED FILM...) HA, HA, HA. THE REASON BEING THAT, MY IMAGE FOR THIS STORY WAS, "AN OLDER, GROWNUP" STORY. (FOR ME, ANYWAY.)

HENCE, FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, THE HALF-NAKED HEROINE. IN CHAPTER THREE, TAKARA'S CLOTHES ARE COMING OFF, TOO. THIS IS MY WAY. SERIOUSLY SPEAKING, I REALLY ADORE DRAWING STORIES THAT CAN EXPRESS EROS WITHOUT ACTUALLY DEPICTING SOMETHING SEXUAL. VERY MUCH. SO, MY WISH IS TO USE *CROSS* AS A CHANCE TO GROW AND TO MATURE. HOWEVER, IT MUST BE DONE WITHIN THE CONFINES OF A GIRLS' MANGA. [SHOJO MANGA]

I WILL KEEP IN MIND THAT EXPRESSING THE CHARACTERISTIC QUALITIES OF GIRLS' MANGA, SUCH AS LOVE AND ITS DEPTH OF EMOTIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, USING MY OWN THEORIES IS AS IMPORTANT A TASK AS DRAWING NEW PICTURES AND FINDING NEW IDEAS, AND I PROMISE TO DO MY BEST TO MAKE *CROSS* AS GOOD AS I CAN. YOUR SUPPORT IS MOST APPRECIATED.

WHOA, WHAT A TEACHER!

ABOUT THE SETTING

WHY DID I USE KAMAKURA FOR THE SETTING? IT'S BECAUSE I JUST LOVE IT. IT HAS A LOT OF GOOD ATMOSPHERE. THE OCEAN IS THERE, WHICH MAKES IT SO ROMANTIC. (FOR ME, WHO LIVES IN AN OCEANLESS SAITAMA PREFECTURE, IT IS A TARGET OF MY ENVY.) (LAUGH) FOR AN ANCIENT CITY, IT HAS WESTERN BUILDINGS AND WESTERN ANTIQUE SHOPS; IT COMBINES THE ELEMENTS AND STYLES OF JAPAN AND THE WEST. BUT!! DO NOT HOLD IT IN CONTEMPT. WHAT BECAME VERY CLEAR TO ME WHEN I WENT THERE IS: KAMAKURA IS A CITY THAT REQUIRES STAMINA. HA, HA, HA. THERE ARE HILLS; THERE ARE STEPS. (ENOSHIMA) IT'S HARD ON A PERSON WHO'S OUT OF SHAPE. I GUESS THE SCHEDULE FOR TAKING PICTURES WAS A HARD ONE, TOO. BUT SADLY, I HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO USE THOSE PICTURES SO FAR. I HOPE TO DRAW SCENES OF KAMAKURA SOON, INCLUDING ENODEN. BY THE WAY, STELLA CROSS CHURCH IS A FICTIONAL CHURCH, TO BE SURE. (YOU KNOW ALREADY?) THERE IS AN ACTUAL SCHOOL THAT IS A MODEL FOR THE SCHOOL. IT'S THE MIDDLE SCHOOL THAT I USED TO GO TO. (IT WAS A PUBLIC SCHOOL, BUT VERY FLAMBOYANT.) IT'S IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD. FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO LIVE IN KAMAKURA, OR ARE GOING TO KAMAKURA ON A TRIP, I WOULD BE HAPPY IF YOU WOULD IMAGINE TAKARA AND SHIZUHA WALKING AROUND THE STATION, THE PARKS AND THE BEACHES, WHEREVER YOU ARE.

LAST, BUT NOT LEAST, TO THE EDITING STAFF: SORRY FOR EVERYTHING I PUT YOU THROUGH. YOUR SUPPORT MEANS A LOT TO ME. WELL, EVERYBODY, SEE YOU IN THE NEXT VOLUME!!! (IF THERE'S SPACE)

POSTSCRIPT: THE END

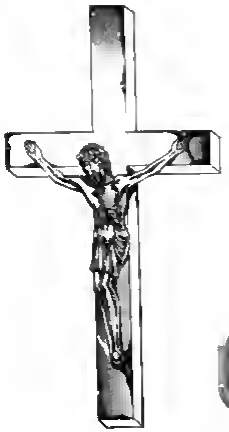
VOICE OF FANS:

THANKS TO ALL OF YOU WHO'VE WRITTEN. I CAN'T ALWAYS REPLY, BUT I DO READ THEM. MOST OF THE LETTERS ABOUT *CROSS* ARE LOVE LETTERS TO TAKARA. HE'S REALLY POPULAR, AS HE IS IN THE STORY. (LAUGH) WHEN I READ THE LETTERS, IT MAKES ME REMEMBER THE HEROES I USED TO LIKE WHEN I WAS IN GRADE SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL. I HOPE THAT TAKARA WILL BECOME A CHARACTER THAT THE READERS (AND THE EDITORS [LAUGH]) WILL COME TO LOVE. AS FOR SHIZUHA, I LOVE ALL THE SUPPORT YOU'VE GIVEN ME. I THINK THAT IN THE END, I AM SEEING TAKARA THROUGH SHIZUHA'S EYES. "PLEASE LET THE TWO BE TOGETHER. MAKE THEM HAPPY." "I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO THE TWO FALLING IN LOVE." I CAN'T WRITE UNLESS THERE'S A LOVE INTEREST IN THE STORY, SO... (LAUGH) YOU CAN COUNT ON ME IN THAT RESPECT. BUT WILL THEIR LOVE BE CONSUMMATED?? I DON'T KNOW!! IF YOU WANT TO KNOW, YOU MUST CONTINUE TO READ *CROSS*. IT'S SCARY THAT I'M ABLE TO THROW IN A SALES PITCH SO SEAMLESSLY. (LAUGH) IN ANY CASE, I APPRECIATE THAT YOU SIMPLY TOOK THE TIME TO WRITE. IT GIVES ME MUCH ENCOURAGEMENT. TO THOSE OF YOU WHO JUST STARTED READING, AND TO THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE BEEN LONG-TIME READERS, I LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU.

B.G.M. [BACKGROUND MUSIC]

I USED IT WITHOUT FAIL WHEN I'M WORKING ON THE PLOT, THE GESTURE DRAWINGS [??NE-MU] OR ILLUSTRATION. A MUSIC THAT MATCHES THE IMAGE OF THE WORK. WITH *CROSS*, I'VE BEEN LISTENING TO "ENIGMA" THAT WAS RECOMMENDED BY A FRIEND, OR A TITLE SONG OF A DRAMA SERIES, "YOU ARE MY SECRET" AND "SUMMER OF LOVE" BY DATE OF BIRTH (SOMETHING GROWNUP). THE ONE THAT MATCHED TAKARA'S IMAGE PERFECTLY WAS "LOVE PHANTOM" BY B'Z. LISTEN TO IT SOMETIME WITH THAT IN MIND. (SORRY, TO THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE B'Z FANS.) THERE ARE MANY OTHERS, BUT...OH, NO MORE SPACE...

A SOUVENIR FROM KAMAKURA, A GLASS CROSS. IT SEEMS SO FRAGILE, SO I HAVEN'T PUT IT ON YET. IT'S AQUA BLUE.



Next in the book of

Cross

Takara responds to a desperate call for help from a young boy who suspects his brother is responsible for a recent series of horrific murders. At first it sounds more like a case for the police than a young exorcist, until Takara discovers that the prime suspect may already be dead! And when the killer uses Shizuha as bait to draw Takara in, the young priest will have to use all of his skill if he ever wants to see another day. Also in this volume...the origin of the exorcist, code name: "Cross"!

Cross

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Author: Fred Gettings

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Author: Z'ev Ben Shimon Halevi

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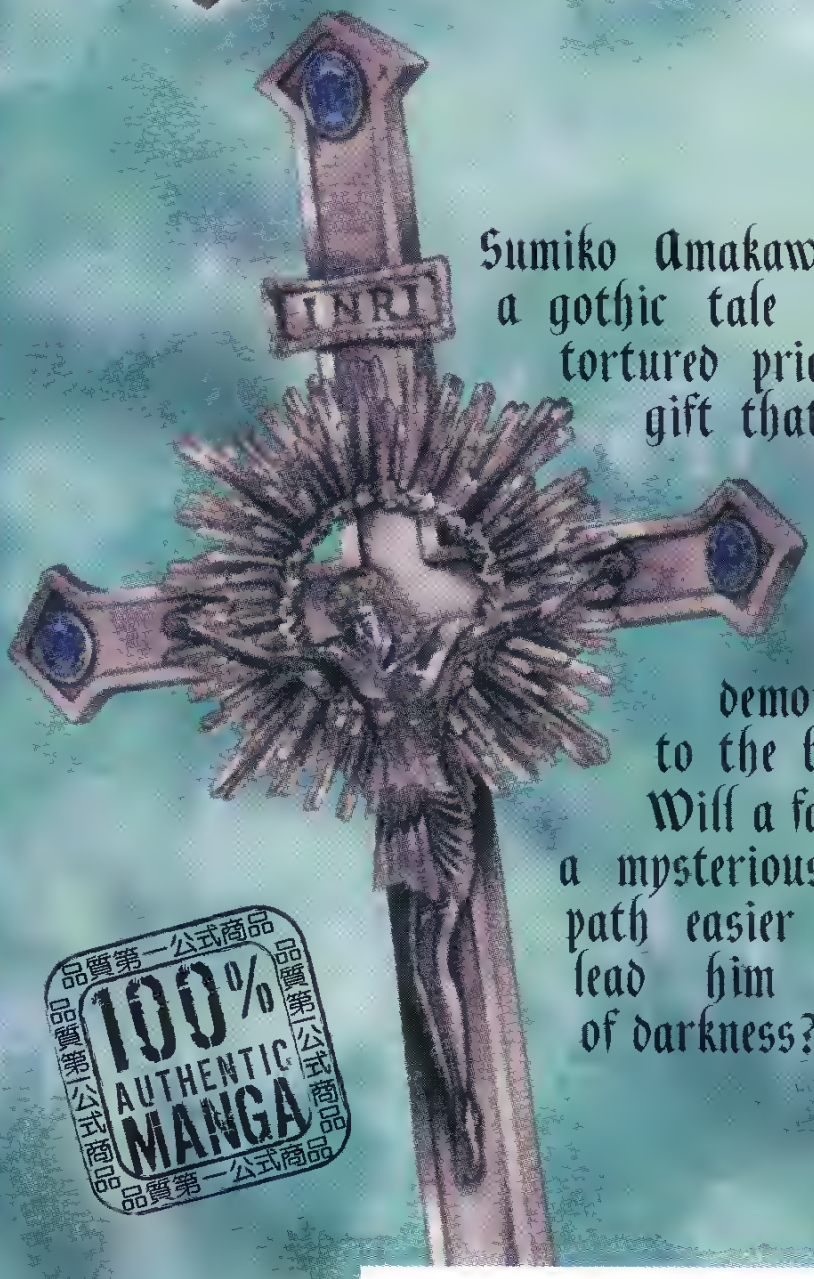

Sumiko Amakawa's *Cross* spins a gothic tale about a young, tortured priest with a holy gift that is a blessing—and a curse! All hell breaks loose when our saintly hero exorcises demons, pushing him to the brink of insanity. Will a fated meeting with a mysterious girl make his path easier to navigate...or lead him to the heart of darkness?

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